

CHRISTIAN ORIENT

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LITURGY

EVOLUTION OF THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Dr. John Moolan

THE EXPOSITION OF THE CHURCH SERVICES:

A BRIEF ANALYSIS

Dr. Francis Pittappillil

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

ACCORDING TO ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN

Dr. Jyothy Maria DST

NEWS

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Mar George Alencherry
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Editorial

The present issue of Christian Orient carries three articles which are much relevant for the liturgical theology. In the Eastern traditions the explanation of the liturgical celebration contributes in a decisive manner to the theological development.

The first article by Prof. John Moolan is on the Church Calendar. One of the rich characteristics of the liturgies of the Oriental tradition is the liturgical calendar. Though the Christian liturgical calendar is rooted in the calendar of Jews, it has given shape to a calendar, incorporating the theological riches of the important phases in the history of salvation. One and the same mystery of Christ which is celebrated in the Sunday liturgy is commemorated in the liturgical year in the span of one year enabling the believers to have a profound experience of the mystery and consequent experience of salvation. Prof. John Moolan invites our attention to the historical and theological development of the liturgical calendar in the various ecclesial traditions. It is a detailed analysis of the history of the liturgical calendar from the first century up to the sixteenth century. The first century witnessed the development of the 'Sunday celebration'. Most of the Jewish feasts were understood in a Christian sense, and thus there was a christianization of some Jewish feasts. Second century is noted

by the development of the celebration of Easter, the Christian Passover. The development of the paschal fast and observance of the memory of martyrs occurred in the third century. Fourth century witnessed the development of the notion of Sunday as the day of rest and also as the eschatological day. In this period the forty days' fast in view of Easter celebration became an established practice. We also find the development of feasts like Christmas and Epiphany. The celebration of the liturgical year with various seasons became a steady practice in the fourth century. The Christological controversies of fifth to sixth centuries contributed to the calculation of Christmas date and several feasts of Blessed Virgin Mary. The Christian liturgical calendar attains its basic shape by the end of sixth century.

The second article by Fr. Francis Pittappillil deals with the East Syrian commentary of the 9th century Anonymous Author on the liturgical services. Being the first and integral commentary of the East Syrian liturgy after the work of Patriarch Išo'yahb III, it stands as the chief source to understand the symbolic and catechetical value of the East Syrian liturgy. Anonymous Author's commentary sheds much light on the historical development of the East Syrian liturgy. This commentary's time is marked by the prevalence of different practices of

the same liturgical rite. The Author provides us with the interpretations given by the proponents of the various practices.

The seven *memre* of the Exposition of the Church Services (ECS) comment on the various liturgical celebrations of the Church rather in a well developed form. ECS is a liturgical, theological, symbolic and spiritual treatise of the East Syrian tradition. The ECS consists of seven *memre* (treatises) which are rather complementary to each other and express some kind of unity between them. Each *memra* deals with the theological and liturgical aspects of the various services of the Church in a mystagogical manner. The first *memra* is about the Liturgical year, the second explains the Ramša, the third is about the Lelya and the Sapra; the fourth deals with the Holy Mysteries, the fifth is on Baptism, the sixth deals with the Consecration of the Church and commemoration of Saints, and the last *memra* is about Funeral and Marriage Services. Fr. Pittappillil provides us with the most important contents of all these seven *memre*. The list of the chapters of each *memra* is indeed of great use for any one interested in the East Syrian tradition.

The article by Sr. Jyothy Maria DST on the Holy Eucharist according to Alexander Schmemmann provides us with a summary and critical evaluation of the works of Schmemmann, the world renowned Russian Orthodox theologian, on Liturgy in general and Eucharist in particular. Schmemmann analyses the structure of the Eucharistic celebration, exposes its theology

and speaks about reductions made within the structure of the Eucharist. Sr. Jyothy Maria deals with these as the order, theology and disorder of the Eucharist.

The first part of the article is on the Order of the Eucharistic celebration. Schmemmann presents the earliest structure of the Christian Eucharist as very much dependant on the Judaic liturgy. The Christian liturgy originated from the Jewish liturgical practice especially from the Synagogue order of service. Sr. Jyothy Maria analyses the various hypotheses regarding the Jewish influence proposed by Schmemmann. What is of great interest in the theology of the Eucharist presented by Schmemmann is the supreme role attributed to the Church in relation to the Eucharist. Church and Eucharist are existentially related to each other. Schmemmann stresses the eschatological and cosmic dimensions of the Eucharist. Another significant aspect of the Eucharistic theology of Schmemmann is the essential relation of Eucharist to the Kingdom. Eucharist is the anticipated experience of the Kingdom; it is the pledge and assurance of the world to come. The author tries to see the Eucharist against the background of cosmos and thus the cosmic dimension of the Eucharistic celebration is well brought out. In the final part of the article Sr. Jyothy Maria turns our attention to the observations of Schmemmann on the disorder created within the structure of Eucharist. Thus Schmemmann's important observations on the structure and theology of Eucharist are briefly presented in this article

Evolution of the Church Calendar

Prof. Dr. John Moolan

Introduction

For the first thousand years, the Church year had no fixed forms as evident today. The formation of liturgical year in the Church was the result of theological developments through centuries. The elementary structure of the Church year, though varied in different places, took shape during the early centuries in and around the ancient major theological centres of the East and West. The Eastern centres were Jerusalem in Palestine, Alexandria in Egypt, Antioch in Syria, Byzantium (Constantinople or Istanbul), Nisibis, and Edessa in Turkey. The Western centres were Rome (the main centre), Carthage in North Africa, Toledo in Spain, Tours in Gaul, and the monasteries in Britain and Ireland, though they were later absorbed into one group as the Latin Church.

Feasts like Easter, Pentecost, Christmas, Epiphany and the exaltation of

the Cross had decisive roles to play in this regard. The internal significance of these celebrations stressed the theological importance of Christ events. The liturgy was in its growing stage up to the middle ages. Around the sixteenth century, almost all the liturgical rites took shape in the Church. The concern here is to see those ancient liturgical practices, which gave shape to the formation of different Church calendars in due course of time.¹

I. First Century

Two important developments during this period were the significance of Sunday and the Christian sense of participation in Jewish feasts. The early Christians strictly followed up Jewish traditions in imitation of Jesus' visiting temple and synagogues to participate rituals and prayers observed there. Nevertheless, they gave always Christ orientation to all such situations. This attempt based on the

¹ A. A. Mc Arthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year* (London, 1953); G. Dix, *The shape of the Liturgy* (London, 1978) 333-396; A. Adam, *The Liturgical Year* (New York, 1981); T. J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (Collegeville, 1986); R. Taft, "The Liturgical Year: Studies, Prospects, Reflections," *Worship* 55.1 (1981) 2-23; J. F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Worship: the Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy* (Rome, 1987); P. F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origin of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (Oxford, 1992); *Early Christian Worship: A Basic Introduction to Ideas and Practice* (London, 1996).

salvific acts of Christ for the redemption of humanity opened up a new horizon to the practical aspects of Christian life in search of retaining the actualisation of Christ experience always with them.

1. Sundays/Weekly Pasch

Almost all the post resurrection appearances took place on Sundays, the first and the eighth day of the week. Appearances on the first day were to Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:9), disciples to Emmaus (Lk 24:13), and apostles (Jn 20:19); on the eighth day appearance was to the apostle Thomas (Jn 20:26). The only appearance without specifying the day was that which took place to the apostles at the sea of Tiberius (Jn 21:1). However, a week has only seven days, the significance of the eighth day as Sunday is purely eschatological as the expected day of the second coming of Christ to begin a new world.²

a. Naming of Days

The naming of seven days in a week, based on quarterly subdivision of a lunar month (28 days), originated several

thousand years ago in BCE among the Semitic people in the Near East.³ They simply called the days as the first day, second day, third day, fourth day, fifth day, sixth day and seventh day of the week. The Egyptians named these Semitic days after the heavenly bodies of sun, moon and five other visible planets (Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn) as their pagan deities. The Germanic people renamed four weekdays (from third to sixth) after their own deities as Tiw's-day (god of war), Woden's-day, Thor's-day, and Frigg's-day (goddess of love). The Jews never gave the names of heavenly luminaries to the days of the week, but following the Semitic tradition they counted week days as first day, second day and so on, but with respective titles for the sixth and seventh days as "Preparation Day" (Mk 15:42) and "Sabbath Day" (Ex 20:10; 31:15; 35:2; Lev 23:3; Deut 5:14). Emperor Constantine in 321 established the present system of calling week days as Sunday to Saturday in the Roman Church calendar.

² *Letter of Barnabas* (before 130) 15.

³ G. Dues, *Catholic Customs and Traditions: A Popular Guide* (Mystic, 1998) 31.

Semitic	Egyptian	Germanic	Jewish	Roman
First day	Sun's-day	Sun's-day	First day	Sunday
Second day	Moon's-day	Moon's-day	Second day	Monday
Third day	Mars'-day	Tiw's-day	Third day	Tuesday
Fourth day	Mercury's-day	Woden's-day	Fourth day	Wednesday
Fifth day	Jupiter's-day	Thor's-day	Fifth day	Thursday
Sixth day	Venus'-day	Frigg's-day	Preparation day	Friday
Seventh day	Saturn's-day	Saturn's-day	Sabbath day	Saturday

b. Christianisation

Among the weekdays, Sunday as the first/eighth day is the present basis and nucleus of the Church calendar (SC 106). The worshiping day of the early Christians was not the Jewish seventh day of Sabbath, but Sunday, the first/eighth day of the week. They never preoccupied with any other day of the week due to Sunday's special importance of resurrection with its expected eschatological fulfilment at the end of time. It was Justin the Martyr (d.165), who first introduced the name Sunday in Christian liturgy saying, "On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in country gather together in one place."⁴ This change might have made in view of spreading the Gospel due to the universal recognition of Sunday, and for the Christianisation of Sunday from pagan sun

worship to the symbolism of Christian worship. Christians recognised Sunday (sun's day) as their worshipping day symbolising Christ, the 'Sun of Justice' (Mal 4:2), 'light of the world' (Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46), 'light of revelation to the gentiles' (Lk 2:32), and 'true light that enlightens every one' (Jn 1:9).

(1) Jewish Influence

Though the Sunday worship is purely Christian, the counting of the day from evening to evening is of Jewish influence⁵ in imitation of the Semitic reckoning,⁶ which differed from the Roman reckoning of midnight to midnight. Sunday worship took place on Saturday evening, the beginning of Sunday, at around 6 p.m. just as the Jews observed their Sabbath (seventh day/Saturday) service at the preparation day evening (sixth day/Friday). The uniqueness

⁴ 1 Apology 67; A.C.Coxe, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers*, ANF I (Michigan, 1967) 186.

⁵ G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 337.

⁶ P. F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origin of Christian Worship*, 192.

of this day was established with an Easter vigil office before the breaking of the bread as the Eucharistic celebration (Acts 20:7-11). As a result, Sunday became a day of joy and of baptism,⁷ where fasting and kneeling were prohibited.⁸

(2) Different Names

The early Christians named Sunday in various ways due to the importance of various themes stressed on this day.⁹ "Resurrection Day" stressed resurrection,

"Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10; *Didache* 14) recommended worship, "Agape Day" emphasised charity meal, "Gathering Day" promoted *koinonia*, "Contribution Day" encouraged collection for the widows and poor, and "Eighth Day" indicated the eschatological new beginning.¹⁰ The "first and eight day" of the week emphasise the eschatological dimension, because the eighth (day) will be like the first when the first life will be restored to the eternity.¹¹

Sunday	Thematic Impacts
First day	Resurrection appearance day (Mk 16:9; Lk 24:13; Jn 20:19) Contribution day for the poor (1 Cor 16:2)Gathering day to break the bread or agape day (Acts 20:7)
Eighth day	Resurrection appearance day (Jn 20:26) with the vision of <i>Parousia</i>
Lord's day	Worshipping day (1 Cor 5:5; 2Cor 1:14; 1 Thes 5:2; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 1:10)

As a result, the Sunday celebration became their weekly Pasch. The highlight of this celebration was the ritual blessing of the Eucharistic bread and cup (1 Cor 11:23-26), preceded by the agape meal or 'love feast', a regular charity meal for widows and the poor to maintain fellowship within the Christian community

(1 Cor 11:17-20). Due to abuses in the agape meal, later it was separated from the Eucharistic meal (1 Cor 11:21-22). The absence from this gathering was considered as sacrilegious (Heb 10:25): "Make not your worldly affairs of more account than the Word of God; but on the Lord's Day leave

⁷ P. G. Cobb, "The History of the Christian Year", in C. Jones, G. Wainwright, E. Yarnold, eds., *The Study of the Liturgy* (London, 1993) 404.

⁸ Tertullian, *de Cor.* 3; *De Orat.* 23; Cassian, *Institutes* 2.18; Council of Nicaea, canon 20.

⁹ A. Adam, *The Liturgical Year*, 39-45.

¹⁰ J. Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Michigan, 1979) 242-286; R.J. Bauckham, "Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church," in D. A. Carson, ed., *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Michigan, 1982) 251-298.

¹¹ Augustine, *Ep.* 55.17.

everything and run eagerly to your church."¹²

(3) Blessing the Light

At the separation of the regular meal from the Eucharist, the Jewish custom of blessing the light or lamp at their evening ceremonial meals came to be applied also among the Christians symbolising Christ's presence at their Eucharistic meal during the night (Acts 20:8). At the separation of the Eucharist during the night, Christians continued the blessing of light or lamp as a special evening ritual service, later called the *Lucernarium* (lamp lighting ceremony), which gradually developed into vespers (daily evening prayer service), and to the blessing of the Easter Fire and the Paschal Candle in the West during the middle ages.¹³

2. Christian Sense of Jewish Feasts

Early Christians continued their participation in the Old Testament Jewish feasts, but with a New Testament sense of fulfilment in Christ. Out of the seven Jewish feasts, three of them were major feasts known as great pilgrim feasts due to the obligation of making three-time yearly pilgrimage to Jerusalem by every male Jew of twelve years and older to participate them (Ex 23:17). The Christianisation process of Jewish feasts related them to the

paschal mysteries of Christ. Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Dedication are still continued. Even today, the date of Easter is calculated in relation to the full moon of Jewish tradition. Following are the Jewish feast with their Christian meaning.¹⁴

NT Resemblance of Jewish Feasts

a. Three Major Feasts

1. Passover (*Pesach/Pascha*) and the Unleavened Bread (*Matzot*)

The first pilgrim feast of the sacrifice of the paschal lamb on *Nissan* 14, the first full moon of spring in the first Jewish month (Ex 12:1-14; 21-28), followed by seven-day eating of unleavened bread (*Matzot*, Ex 12) from *Nisan* 15 to 21 (March-April), recalling the first Jewish Pascha in Egypt, resembled Jesus the real Pasch (1 Cor 5:7).

2. Pentecost (*Shavuot* – Seven Weeks)

This second pilgrim feast known differently as the feast of the first fruits, the feast of weeks or the feast of harvest after fifty days of Passover (Ex 23:16; Num 28:26) on *Sivan* 6 (May-June) recalling the giving of the law to the Jews after the fall of their temple, resembled the New Testament Pentecost of conferring Holy Spirit to the apostles (Acts 2:4).

¹² *Didache* 23.

¹³ G. Dues, *Catholic Customs and Traditions*, 23.

¹⁴ See the table of 'Jewish Feasts' in RSV bible (Bangalore, 1993) appendix; R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (London, 1961) 484-517; A. Adam, *The Liturgical Year*, 9-16.

3. Tabernacle (*Succoth* – Booth, Tent)

The third pilgrim feast of Booths or Ingathering for seven days (Lev 23:33-36; 39-43), started with the full moon of the seventh month (*Tishri*) from 15 to 22 (Sept-Oct) recalling the Jewish covenant renewal in the wilderness, resembled the new covenant of Jesus to love one another (Jn 15:12).

b. Four Minor Feasts

1. Trumpets (*Rosh Hashanah* – Head of the Year)

The solemn holy convocation day of rest for worship and sacrifice (Lev 23:23-25; Num 29:1-6) proclaimed with blasts of trumpets (*shofar* – ram's horn)¹⁵ on the first day of the seventh month (*Tishri* 1), the first-autumn new moon day of the year (Sept-Oct) recalling the assembly of God's people in memory of the day of Judgement, resembled the Christian Sunday gathering (Acts 20:7).

2. Atonement (*Yom Kippur* – Day of Atonement)

The annual convocation day of atonement (Lev 16; 23:27-28; 25:9) on the tenth day of the seventh month (*Tishri* 10) at the first moon (Sept-Oct) recalling penitential abstinence with fasting, repeated

confession of sins, long prayers, and scripture readings when only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once in the year to offer sin offerings and incense for himself, priests and people with driving out of *Azazel* (demon/devil?) or scapegoat (called later) into the wilderness (Lev 16:22), resembled the Christian custom of purification process during the paschal time (Jn 13:1-11 Jesus' washing of the feet).

3. Dedication (*Hanukkah* – Inauguration, Renewal)

The eight-day feast of the rededication of the destroyed Jerusalem temple by Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers (1 Macc 4:36-61), known also as the feast of light with the lighting of new added light for each day of eight days in an eight branched candelabrum¹⁶ in each home from twenty-fifth of the ninth month (*Chislev* 25) for 8 days (Nov - Dec) recalling the glory of the temple with sacrifice of deliverance and praise with special joy (called as Jewish Christmas), resembled the rededication of the Church (Bride) to Christ (Groom) at the end of the world (Mt 25:31-46).

4. Lots (*Purim* – Casting Lots)

The feast of two days of rejoicing on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the twelfth (last) month of the year (*Adar* 14-15) in

¹⁵ The trumpet in this connection is not of a metal one, but of ram's horn (*shofar*) still used in the synagogue worship, in memory of the sacrifice of a ram in the place of Isaac (Gen 22:13). See Scholem Ben-Chorin, "Die Feste des jüdischen Jahres," *Theologische-Praktische Quartalschrift* 125 (1977) 160-161.

¹⁶ *Hanukkah* candelabrum is different from the usual Jewish Menorah, the seven branched candelabrum (1 Macc 4:50); Scholem Ben-Chorin, "Die Feste des jüdischen Jahres," 162.

memory of the extraordinary deliverance of Jews in the Persian Diaspora by Esther and Mordecai (Feb-March) from the slavery of Haman, the great enemy of the Jews (Esth 3:7; 9:19, 24; 10:3), recalling the power of divine protection over Israel, resembled Christ's divine protection over the Church (Mt 16:16-19).

II. Second Century

Second century met with the establishment of the annual feast of Pasch among Christians, which later became the centre of the Church calendar for its further growth towards the cycle of a year.¹⁷ The English word *Pasch* was derived from the Greek term *Pascha* with its Aramaic form *Pesach* meaning *Passover*. Christians substituted the Jewish annual feast of Pasch (Ex 12:1-13; 21-32) with their annual feast of the resurrection of the Lord, the true Pasch, who freed humanity from the slavery of death and sin to the freedom of life through His death and resurrection. The day of Pasch/Easter was the main issues of this period.

Resurrection Sunday/Annual Pasch/Easter Christian Passover became the great annual feast of redemption as a unified commemoration of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. The name Easter among the English speaking people

originated from the feast of Eostre, an ancient Greek goddess of light, celebrated at the spring equinox on March 21, the sun's reaching/crossing the equator. Since the Pasch was celebrated during the spring season, Christians changed this pagan name to Easter indicating the resurrection of Jesus, the true light of the world (Jn 1:9).

a. The Content

The twofold phases of the primitive Christian annual Pasch/Easter were the death and resurrection as the participation in the suffering and glory of Christ. Hence the Christian Pasch included a *Triduum*, which began on Good Friday and closed with Easter Sunday. The first part included penance and mourning, while the second part contained great joy in resurrection. Thus the Pasch (Passover) signified the transition from mourning to joy.¹⁸

In the beginning stage, both in the East and West the celebration of the annual Pasch took place differently on different days due to the synoptic and the fourth Gospels' approach to the date of death of Jesus on 14 or 15 of Nisan.¹⁹ This paved the way for heated controversies between the East and West during the second century before fixing a common date of Pasch/Easter in the fourth century.

¹⁷ J. A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy: To the Time of Gregory the Great* (London, 1976) 25-27; T. J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 1-26. A. Adam, *The Liturgical Year*, 57-63.

¹⁸ O. Cassel, "Art und Sinn der ältesten christlichen Osterfeier", *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 12 (1938) 1-78; E. Dekkers, *Tertullianus en de geschiedenis der Liturgie* (Brussels, 1947) 147-156.

¹⁹ A. A. McArthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, 82-87.

b. Asia Minor and Syria

The communities in Asia Minor and Syria in the East following the apostolic tradition of John and Paul stressed the theme that Christ is our Passover/Pasch, and celebrated the annual Pasch together with the Jewish Passover feast on Nisan 14. According to John (19:31), Christ died at the same hour when the paschal lambs were slaughtered in the Jerusalem Temple on the Jewish preparation day (Friday). The death cry of Jesus was heard from the Mount Calvary exactly when the paschal lambs' cry at their slaughter in the Temple was heard from the opposite Mount Jerusalem.²⁰ For St. Paul, Christ is the paschal lamb sacrificed for our sake (1 Cor 5:7). Thus, they claimed that the Pascha should be celebrated annually on the precise date of Jesus' historical Passover, Nisan 14, the first full moon of the Jewish year, which may occur in any day of the week. Those who followed this tradition came to be known as *Quartodeciman* Christians, since they celebrated Pasch on *Quartodecima die* (fourteenth day).²¹ Two bishops of Asia Minor, Policarp of Smyrna (d. ca. 155-168) and Polycrates of Ephesus (d. 200) supported *Quartodeciman* tradition as the correct one.

c. Rome

In Rome, they followed up the synoptic tradition of the death of Jesus on

Nisan 15, the first day of the unleavened bread (Mt 26:17; Mk 14:12; Lk 22:7). Therefore they argued that the Jewish Pasch on Nisan 14 had nothing to do with Jesus' own Pasch (Passover) that took place on the very next day of the Jewish Pasch. Thus they stressed the theme of Resurrection on the first day of the week (Sunday), and celebrated Pasch on the Sunday after Nisan 14. Pope Anicetus (155-166) supported this custom of annual Pasch on Sunday.

d. Controversy

The paschal controversy started with the papal attempts to bring the East in agreement with the Western computation of the annual Paschal/Easter day.²² In order to solve the problem, bishop Polycrates from Asia Minor went to Rome and discussed the matter with Pope Anicetus (155-166). Considering the identity of the East and West, and respecting the principle of unity in diversity, the discussion ended up amicably deciding to retain the *status quo*.

The problem became acute when Pope Victor I (189-199) decided upon the matter in favour of Roman tradition, imposing the entire province of Asia to observe Pasch (Easter) on the Sunday following Nisan 14. Churches in Asia Minor opposed Victor's decision. Polycrates in his letter to Pope

²⁰ *Mishna Pesachim* 5; R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, 469.

²¹ T. J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 5-13; F. E. Brightman, "The Quartodeciman Question", *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1924) 257, 268.

²² Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* V. 23-25; see P. Schaff, H. Wace, eds., *Eusebius: Church History*, NPNF, Series 2, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, 1952) 241-244.

Victor favoured the Eastern position saying:

"We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord's coming, when he shall come with glory from heaven, and shall seek out all the saints."²³

At this juncture, Irenaeus of Lyons (177-202), a companion of Victor, intervened and wrote him urging for a moderate decision in this regard. As a result the problem was solved granting Asia Minor the former freedom of retaining the *status quo*.

III. Third Century

Formation of Paschal fast, Wednesday-Friday fast, and martyrs' memory were the main developments of this period. Annual Paschal fast led to the later formation of the period of Great Fast/Lent. Weekly fasts on Wednesdays and

Fridays led to the significance of these days next to Sundays in Christian liturgy and the martyrs' memory led to the commemoration of saints in different Church calendars in the course of time.

1. Paschal Fast

The formation of Paschal fast took place differently in different times and places. A summary of its external development in the early centuries keeps up the coherence in observing fast, a preparation for the Great Paschal Feast of Resurrection.²⁴

Eusebius of Caesaria (d. 339),²⁵ citing the letter of Irenaeus (d. ca. 202) to Pope Victor I (189-199), speaks of a paschal fast during the last days of Holy Week.²⁶ However, at least from the time of Tertullian (d. 220) and Hippolytus (d. 235), the Latin West fasted on Good Friday and Holy Saturday²⁷ in imitation of Jewish two-day fast from the preparation day (the

²³ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* V. 24. 2; P. Schaff, H. Wace, eds., *Eusebius: Church History*, 242.

²⁴ A. A. Mc Arthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, 114-132 and P. Regan, "The Three Days and Forty Days", in *Worship* 54 (1980) 2-18, have discussed in detail the formation of the Lenten Season in early centuries. For its development in Jerusalem before the 5th century, see M. F. Lages, "Etapas de l'évolution du Carême à Jérusalem avant le Ve siècle", *Revue des études Arméniennes* 6 (1969) 67-102.

²⁵ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* V. 24. 12; see P. Schaff, H. Wace (ed.), *Eusebius: Church History*, 243; PG 20, 501-504.

²⁶ During the 4th and early 5th centuries, the Pasch contained three days: Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. These days were called "paschal triduum" as a single feast of redemption; see P. Regan, "Three Days and Forty Days," 2-5; C. Mohrman, "Pascha, Passio, Transitus," in *Etude sur le Latin de Chrétiens*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1961) 205-222; J. Tally, "History and Eschatology in the primitive Pascha," in *Worship* 47 (1973) 212-221; M. Richard, "La question Pascal au I^{er} siècle," *L'Orient Syrien* 6 (1961) 179-212; C. Chavasse, "La Structure du carême et les lectures des messes quadragésimales dans la liturgie Romaine," in *La Maison-Dieu* 31 (1952) 81.

²⁷ A. Reiferscheid, G. Vissowa, eds., *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani opera*, CSEL 20.1 (Vindobonae, 1890) 291-293; B. Botte, ed., *Hyppolyte de Rome: la Tradition Apostolique*, SC 11 (Paris, 1946) 47-49, 64-65, no. 20, 29.

immolation day of Paschal lambs in the temple) until eating the Passover meal.²⁸ The reason for this Christian fast was the saying of Jesus that the wedding guests do not fast while the bridegroom is with them, but they fast when the bridegroom is taken away from them (Mk 2:19-20).

Later this fast was extended to six days before Easter. The third century *Didascalia Apostolorum*,²⁹ and Dionysius of Alexandria (d. 264)³⁰ in his letter to Basilides³¹ regarding Great Saturday, the final day of the fast, speak of six fast days before Easter. This might have been in imitation of Israelites' preparation for the Paschal Feast. They ate unleavened bread for seven days before the feast (Ex 12:15, Deut 16:13). But the Christians fasted only for six days, because Sunday being the day of the Lord, was exempted from fasting.³²

2. Wednesday-Friday Fast

The Jews fasted twice a week (Lk 18:12) on Wednesdays and Fridays as preparation

for synagogues on market days (Mondays and Thursdays) and *Sabbath* days (Saturdays). The Christians fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays with a different motivation of participating the suffering and death of Jesus for attaining resurrection. The foretelling of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection (Mt 26:1-5; Mk 14:1-5; Lk 9:22, 44; 18:32-33) and Judas' agreeing upon the betrayal of Jesus (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10-11 Lk 22:1-6) took place on Wednesday, the fourth day of the week. Friday, the sixth day of the week (Mk 15:42),³³ is crucifixion day of Jesus at which the whole creation trembled and mourned for the greatest sin ever committed by humanity.³⁴

3. Martyrs' Memory

The first evidence for martyrs' commemoration comes from Asia Minor with the martyrdom of Polycarp of Smyrna who was burned to death at the stake on

²⁸ T. J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 27.

²⁹ A. Vööbus, ed., *The 'Didascalia Apostolorum' in Syriac*, CSCO, Scriptorum Syri 179 (Louvain, 1979) 214.

³⁰ M. Routh, *Reliquiae Sacrae*, Vol. 3 (Oxonii, 1847) 229; see S. Salaville, "La tessaracoste du Ve canon de Nicée (325)," *Echos d'Orient* 13 (1910) 66.

³¹ O. Stahlin, ed., *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Vol. 2: *Stromata Buch I*, 21: *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig, 1906) 91; PG 8, 888.

³² E. Vandard, "Carême," *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* 2.2 (1910) 2140.

³³ *Didache* 8.1; Tertullian, *De Orat.* 19; *Didascalia Apostolorum* 5.21; See G. P. Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals*, Vol. 2 (London, 1852) 416; A. A. Mc Arthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, 24; P. G. Cobb, "The History of the Christian Year," in C. Jones et al, *Study of the Liturgy* 406; A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (New York, 1996) 157. The weekly commemorations of Latin Church today are, Monday for Trinity, Tuesday for Angels, Wednesday for Apostles (from 1920 onwards for St. Joseph and Peter & Paul also), Thursday for H. Spirit (from 1604 onwards for Eucharist, and 1935 onwards for the High Priesthood of Christ also), Friday for the Cross (from 1604 onwards for Christ's passion also), and Saturday for Mary.

³⁴ See W. Cureton. ed., and trans., *Ancient Syriac Documents* (London, 1864) 26; A. Vööbus, ed., and trans., *Synodicon in West Syrian Tradition*, CSCO 367, Scriptorum Syri 161-162 (Louvain, 1975) 189, 202.

23 February 155/156. Christians collected his remaining bones like pearls, buried them in a safer place, and prayed together.³⁵ Though the memory of martyrs started in the East out of persecutions in the second century, its celebration as yearly commemoration originated in the West during the third century reaching its climax in the fourth century with Constantine's edict of Milan (313), which closed the period of persecution.³⁶

Martyrs were held in high esteem as they were the real heroes of faith in Christ. Their courage in witnessing faith even at the cost of life made them venerable as confessors³⁷ of faith in the community. As the good role models in imitating Christ, their veneration had great significance in the Church. Increasing number of these memorials necessitated the giving shape to the *Depositio Martyrum*, the oldest Roman chronographic calendar of 354, to inform people the days and places of twenty-four feast days of which only two – Christmas on December 25 and *Petri Cathedra* (Peter's chair, presently Peter's enthronement as bishop) on February 2 – were not of martyrs.³⁸

IV. Fourth Century

The fourth century freedom of the Church stopped persecutions and paved the way for the spreading of the Church in the Roman Empire. Instead of private homes of Christian worship, basilicas were built with the financial and political patronage of Constantine, the Emperor. By the end of the fourth century, Christians had built large basilicas virtually in every city of the empire with bishops as the local Church leaders. One of the first cities to develop a fully urban liturgy was Jerusalem, which incorporated all the historical sites of Jesus' life into its liturgical life celebrating Jesus' nativity in Bethlehem, passion and resurrection at the Sepulchre and the triumphal entry at the Mount of Olives. Hagiopolite (stational) liturgy of making procession from holy place to holy place with pertained services conducted in each place was one of the main features of Jerusalem worship.

The important establishments like Sunday as the day of rest, forty-day fast before the Pasch, Easter day computation, celebrations of feasts and formation of liturgical seasons in this period strengthened the Christian spirituality.

³⁵ *Martyrium Polycarpi* ch. 18; A.C.Coxe, ed., *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, ANF 1 (Grand Rapids, 1967) 43.

³⁶ J. A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*, 177-178. K. Donovan, "The Sanctoral," in C. Jones et al, *The Study of the Liturgy*, 421-424.

³⁷ The word confessor in Latin tradition is another name coined for a martyr. As martyrs, though they were without the laying on of hands, often, they were granted the special honorary privilege of deacons or even presbyters, if they had been chained in prison for the Name (of Jesus). See G. Dix, *The Treaties on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome*, Vol. 1, (London, 1937) 18f.

³⁸ T. Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy* (Oxford, 1979) 87.

1. Sunday, the Day of Rest

During the early centuries, Sunday was a working day. Due to the Emperor Trajan's (98-117) prohibition of all suspicious gatherings at night, the Eucharistic celebration was shifted from night to before the dawn on Sunday, since the people had to work during the day.³⁹ Until the Emperor Constantine's edict on 3 March 321 declared Sunday a holiday of rest prohibiting work on this day – "All judges, city-people, and craftsmen shall rest on the venerable day of the Sunday"⁴⁰ – Saturday (Jewish Sabbath day) was kept as a holiday in the Roman empire, and Christians, like all others, worked on Sunday, though they set aside the early morning hours for the Eucharistic celebration.

Even then, the people outside the Roman Empire were working on Sunday. Thus, we see the Council of Laodicea (363) canon 29 ordering Christians to work on Sundays for the Lord: "Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's day."⁴¹ Hence, the Council of Narbonne in 589 enforced severe

punishments for those who worked on Sunday, and the Emperor Charlemagne in 789 forbade works on Sundays under the penalty of sacrilege to the violation of the third commandment of God.⁴²

a. Eschatological Rest

Sunday rest as the prefiguration of eschatological eternal rest without work led to the concept of an eighth day as the beginning of a new world to come at the second coming of the Lord:

"...The present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me, but that which I have made in which I will give rest to all things and make the beginning of an eighth day, that is the beginning of another world. Wherefore we also celebrate with gladness the eighth day in which Jesus also rose from the dead, and was made manifest and ascended into heaven."⁴³

George of Arbel, the anonymous author, explaining the significance of seven Sundays in salvation history with seven new beginnings in the economy of salvation, has thought of Sunday as the day of the first (Annunciation) and the second coming (Parousia) of the Lord, though no biblical references are found in this respect.⁴⁴

³⁹ See G. Dues, *Catholic Customs and Traditions*, 22.

⁴⁰ Eusebius, *Vita Const.* 4. 18; see H. Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church* (London, 1943), 26.

⁴¹ H. R. Percival, ed., *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, NPNF, Series 2, Vol. 16 (Michigan, 1900) 148.

⁴² G. Dues, *Catholic Customs and Traditions*, 27-28.

⁴³ *Letter of Barnabas* (before 130) 15; A. C. Coxe, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers*, 147.

⁴⁴ *Anonymi auctoris expositio officiorum Ecclesiae Georgio Arbelensis vulgo adscripta* I, R. H. Conolly, ed., CSCO 91, *Scriptores Syri*, Series 2 (Rome, 1911-1913) 154-155; S. Pudichery, *Ramsa: An Analysis and Interpretation of the Chaldean Vespers* (Bangalore, 1972) 200.

Seven Sundays

1. Beginning of creation (Gen 1:3-5)
2. Tent of testimony by Moses (Ex 40:1, 17)
3. Annunciation to Mary (Lk 1:26f)
4. Resurrection (Jn 20:1f)
5. Apostle Thomas' resurrection experience
(Jn 20:26f)
6. Pentecost (Acts 2:1f)
7. Our own resurrection at the 2nd coming

Seven New Beginnings

1. Beginning of the world
2. Beginning of law and sacrifice to safeguard humanity
3. Beginning of God's presence with people
4. Beginning of future eternal life
5. Beginning of faith in the risen Lord
6. Beginning of the kingdom of the Lord
7. beginning of entry to the new world

The supposition of Annunciation on a Sunday might have been derived from the surveillance of important events that have already been taken place on other Sundays of this scheme. If those decisive divine interventions took place on Sundays (the Lord's days), His own first coming to the world (Annunciation) should have also been taken place on a Sunday as His own day, the Lord's Day. Canon 2 of the *Doctrine of the apostles*, a 4th century pseudo apostolic work of the Syrian Church, says that on the first day of the week He manifested Himself in the world.⁴⁵

If the hypothesis of His first coming to the world on a Sunday is correct, then follows a natural deduction of a Sunday for His second coming too, in order to pronounce His final decisive judgement upon the humanity. Moreover an internal agreement to this hypothesis is being

indicated also by the third commandment of God to keep the Lord's Day holy, and the first commandment of the Church to abstain from work on this particular day. These mandates are given in order to urge the people to get ready to face worthily His abrupt second coming on a Sunday. Jesus has indirectly referred to this fact saying, "Then (on that day) two men will be working in the field; one will be taken, the other left; and two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, the other left" (Mt 24:40-41). In this regard the presumption is that those who keep alert of His Second Coming on Sunday will be taken up, and those who are found unprepared will be left out. It is towards this alertness and preparedness on Sundays that our attention is called for by the third commandment of God and the first commandment of the Church. Canon 2 of

⁴⁵ W. Cureton, ed., and trans., *Ancient Syriac Documents* (London, 1864) 26, trans. 26; A.Vööbus (ed. and trans.), *Synodicon in West Syrian Tradition*, CSCO 367, *Scriptores Syri*, Series 161-162 (Louvain, 1975) 201-202, trans. 189; P. Kannookadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary* (Rome, 1991) 157.

the *Doctrine of the Apostles* also says that on the first day of the week He will appear in the end with the angels of heaven.⁴⁶

b. East Syrian Tradition

The common part of the East Syrian morning liturgy of the hours (*Sapra*) on Sundays/feast days stresses the second coming of Christ. The opening prayer makes the request to make humanity happy to sing praises to the Lord at His second coming: "Lord, shed Your light on us and

make us happy by Your coming; make us partakers of Your Holy Mysteries; make us worthy to join the choirs of angels and sing and extol Your adorable Trinity with gratitude..."⁴⁷ The second half of the first and second hymns on light (*Onyata de Nuhre*) by Ephrem and Narsai express the way of the Second Coming of the Spouse to receive the Bride, and the Bride's waiting to welcome the Spouse on this day as follows:⁴⁸

Ephrem on Christ as Light of Salvation		Narsai on Christ as Light of Revelation	
<i>Isho</i> comes as King again, let us light our lamps and go that we may meet Him with joy and rejoice in endless light. Sing praise to His Majesty, thank and bless His great Father Who in mercy sent His Son for our hope and salvation.	In surprise His day will come, and His waiting saints who toiled light their lamps and all go forth to encounter their dear Lord. Holy angels share the joy in the glory of the just and shall crown them as deserved singing praises with one voice	By that promise of our Lord heaven and earth were joined as one And they now await in hope the new day of His coming. Soon draws near the final day when He comes with our reward Come, prepare with unity to go out to meet the Lord.	Light our lamps with oil of love for that awesome coming day; lest we hear those dreaded words "I know not you nor your deeds!" Till that day when death shall come trade with talents He provides, that we hear His promised words: "Come, receive your due reward!"

All you brethren rouse yourselves:
let us thank our Saviour King
Who shall come to gladden us
in His Kingdom full of light.

While on earth our lives we lead
let us guide our thoughts and deeds
by faith, hope, and charity.
That we reach our heavenly goal.

⁴⁶ W. Cureton, ed. and trans., *Ancient Syriac Document*, 26, trans. 26; A. Vööbus, ed. and trans., *Synodicon*, 201-202, trans. 189; see P. Kannookadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary*, 157.

⁴⁷ V. Pathikulangara, ed., *Bless the Lord: The "Divine Praises" According to the East Syriac or Chaldeo-Indian Liturgical Heritage*, (Kottayam, 1996) 22.

⁴⁸ V. Pathikulangara, ed., *Bless the Lord*, 30, 31.

The special stanza (*Tara'a*) and the concluding part of the hymn of "Let all Praise" (*Barek kolhon*) by three youths in burning furnace (Dan 3:23f), request all to praise the glorious morning of His Second

Coming of raising the dead to give rewards accordingly, so that we too may be found prepared worthy to enter His eternal glory at that splendid dawn of the new day.⁴⁹

Barek kolhon

Tara'a

Conclusion

We give praise with angel hosts	Keep us safe and sound O Lord,	When that splendid morning dawns	As we know, You are the Light,
for that glorious morning when	in this world that fades away.	and You grant us, Lord, Your grace	Light from Light and God from God'
Christ will come to raise the dead	Keep us in Your mercy, Lord,	give us gifts of peace and joy,	with the angels we await
and bestow deserved reward.	on that day You come to judge.	worthy of the life that lasts.	with the hope to see You come

2. Forty-day Fast

The significance of Great fast depended on the forty-day fast of Jesus in the wilderness, which defeated Satan manifesting the great power of fast as the greatest weapon ever employed in spiritual life to over come temptations acquiring divine mercy over God's anger. The term "Lent" developed in the West from the Anglo-Saxon word *Lencten* meaning springtime at which this liturgical season takes place.

Towards the end of the fourth century, Sozomen from Constantinople testifies that the period of preparation for

Pasch had 3, 6, 7 weeks depending on the places.⁵⁰ At any rate, between 295 and 386 we have ample evidence for a six week fast in the period of Great Fast. Athanasius of Alexandria (295-373), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 389) and John Chrysostom (d. 407) make mention of a six week preparation for the Pasch.⁵¹ These weeks were called *Quadragesima*, that is, forty consecutive days excluding Good Friday and Holy Saturday (6x7-2=40), after the forty-day fast of Jesus in the wilderness (Mt 4:2). But Basil the Great (d. 379) testifies to a seven week period of Great Fast excluding Sundays, Good Friday and Holy Saturday in Cappadocia (7x7-7-2=40); and Egeria in

⁴⁹ V. Pathikulangara, ed., *Bless the Lord*, 32, 33.
⁵⁰ Sozomen, *Historica Ecclesiastica* VII, 19 (Paris, 1668) 734f; PG 67, 1477f; C. D. Hartranft, ed. and trans., *The Ecclesiastical History of Szomen: History of the Church from A. D. 323 to A. D. 425*, NPNF, series 2, vol. 2 (Michigan, 1952) 390.
⁵¹ Athanasius, *Epistolae Heortasticae* 2.8, in anno 330; PG 26, 1371; Cyril, *Procatechesis* 4; PG 33, 340; Chrysostom, *Adversus Judaeos* 3.4 ; PG 48, 865f; see. A. A. Mc Arthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, 115-123; S.Salaville, "La Tesseractoste..." 66.

381-384 speaks of an eight-week Lent excluding Saturdays and Sundays in Jerusalem ($8 \times 7 - 16 = 40$).⁵²

At present in the East the period of Great Fast begins on the Monday before the Western Ash Wednesday. It comprises forty days, excluding the Sunday of the first week, Lazarus Saturday (Saturday before *Hosana* Sunday) and Holy Week from the counting ($7 \times 7 - 2 - 7 = 40$). But excluding all the Sundays and the Holy Week, the actual fast days of the season are only 36 ($7 \times 7 - 7 - 6 = 36$).⁵³ This can be counted as an offering of the $\frac{1}{10}$ of the year to the Lord as fast days imitating the Old Testament giving of $\frac{1}{10}$ of everything to the Lord (Gen 28:22). Among the Chaldeans and Malabarites, another four days from Holy Week (Monday to Holy Thursday) are added to complete the traditional number of 40 fast days ($36 + 4 = 40$). Holy Thursday evening begins *triduum*.⁵⁴

3. Easter Day Computation

The Council of Nicea (325) discussed the practical difficulties in following the Jewish tradition of Nisan 14 in Julian calendar for the observance of Pasch/Easter due to its differences in the Roman and Asian recessions of Jewish

calendar. In Rome, Nisan 14 fell on March 25, while in Asian on April 6/10. This caused the duplication of Easter date in different places. The Council did not succeed in finding out a satisfactory solution for this problem, but unanimously decided to entrust the matter with the Patriarch of Alexandria to calculate the correct date of Easter every year and communicate it to different Churches, because the calculation of full moon was a matter of astrology, and Alexandria was famous for astrology. As a result Dionysius Exiguus, a monk and canonist, prepared a table of Paschal/Easter dates up to 626, which was universally approved and sent to different Churches.⁵⁵

a. Calculation

The Easter date was calculated as on the Sunday following the first full moon after March 21.⁵⁶ In order to pacify the East and West the calculation started with March 21, the date of sun's reaching/crossing the equator with equal length of day and night. At the satisfaction of the East, full moon was made the decisive element of fixing the Paschal/Easter day, and supporting the West, Sunday was chosen for the Pasch/Easter celebration.

⁵² Basil, *Homilia* 14, in *ebriosos*; PG 31, 444; Etherie, *Journal de voyage*, ed., H. Petre, SC 21 (Paris, 1947) 207-209; M. F. Lages, "Étapes de l'évolution de carême à Jérusalem avant le Ve siècle", *Revue des études Arméniennes* 6 (1969) 67, 102.

⁵³ G. P. Badger, *The Nestorians and their Rituals*, Vol. 2, 188.

⁵⁴ *Anonymi auctoris expositio officiorum Ecclesiae Georgio Arbelensi vulgo adscripta*, CSCO 91, 51-52; J. Mateos, *Lelya-Sapra*, OCA 156 (Rome, 1972) 158.

⁵⁵ M. Righetti, *Manuale di storia liturgica* II (Milan, 1955) 208-209.

⁵⁶ G. Teres, *The Bible and Astronomy: The Magi and the Star in the Gospel* (Budapest, 2000) 215-216.

Thus, respecting the Jewish practice, and giving equal importance to the solar (West) and lunar (East) calendars, Sunday was chosen for the annual Pasch/Easter without any difficulty.

b. Problem

If the full moon after March 21 falls on a Sunday, when shall be the Easter day? Usually the following Sunday will be the Easter day, but in 1954 when the full moon after March 21 fell on Sunday in April 18, the same Sunday was fixed for Easter, perhaps to avoid the very late occurrence of Easter, e.g. see the column below.⁵⁷

Full Moon Sunday		Easter Sunday	
28	March 1926	04	April 1926
13	April 1930	20	April 1930
02	April 1950	09	April 1950
18	April 1954	18	April 1954

The latest occurrence of Easter on April 25 is a rare happening. In the years 1666, 1734, 1886, and 1943, the Easter was on April 25 and this will happen again only in 2038, 2190 and 2258. Likewise the earliest occurrence of Easter is also a rare happening. In the years 1598, 1693, 1761 and 1818, the Easter was on March 22, and this will happen again only in 2285. So also in the

years 1636, 1704, 1788, 1845, 1856, 1913, and 2008, the Easter was on March 23, and this will happen again only in 2160, 2228, and 2380.⁵⁸

c. Future Possibility

Though there are difficulties in fixing the precise chronology of Jesus' life, many scholars have indicated 7 April 30 CE as the most probable date of death of Jesus, the first Good Friday in history.⁵⁹ Hence the first probable Resurrection Sunday fell on 9 April 30 CE. Since this date comes almost in between March 22 and April 25 as the varying day of Easter in the month of Nisan, the probable reform for a new fixed date of Easter could be drawn to the Sunday after the second Saturday in between April 9-15 or the second Sunday in between April 8-14.⁶⁰ But how far ecumenically this could be successful is a problem.

Anyhow, Catholic Church has no objection to assign a fixed Sunday for Easter in the Gregorian calendar, provided the other Christian denominations agree with it. Likewise, she favours also a perpetual calendar other than the Gregorian one, provided it should safeguard the seven-day week system including Sunday as the first day, so that the creation account may not be affected (SC appendix).

⁵⁷ For this information I am indebted to Rev. Fr. Agapitus CMI of Trichur province, Kerala, letter dated 3 March 1991.

⁵⁸ See V. J. Thottupuzha, "Nerathe Varunna Easter", *Malayala Manorama: Supplement*, March 19 (2008) 19.

⁵⁹ A. Adam, *The Liturgical Year*, 60; J. Blinzer, *The Trial of Jesus*, trans., A. Adam, F. McHugh (Westminster, 1959).

⁶⁰ O. Heimig, "Gedanken zur Kalenderreform," *Liturgie und Mönchtum* 2.9 (1951) 37; L. Meesen, "Oecuménisme et réforme du calendrier," in *La Maison-Dieu* 81 (1965) 120.

4. Origin of Feasts

For the first three centuries, Pasch was the only feast celebrated in Church. Later, the theological controversies in the Church led to the awareness of every feast as the manifestation of Christ and His salvation to the world. As a result, Aryanism in the fourth century paved the way for feasts like Nativity and Epiphany. In Rome the feast of Nativity of Jesus (Christmas) on December 25 was introduced in 354 by the pope Liberius (352-366) in order to turn away Christians from participating a heathen festival of sun god called *Natale invicti solis* (the birthday of unconquered sun), the principal deity of the imperial religion of late antiquity, introduced by emperor Aurelian on the same day in 274 to unite his kingdom.

Similarly Eastern Churches also instituted, somewhat earlier in between 311 and 325, the feast of Epiphany of the Son of God – His manifestation to the world through Incarnation (Nativity) and Baptism – on January 6 in opposition to a popular pagan feast of the Epiphany of the

sun god (Ion-Osiris) observed in Egypt on January 6.⁶¹ In the same century, Roman Church introduced the feast of January 6 referring to Jesus' historical revelations at the visit of Magi, Jordan baptism and Cana miracle.⁶² As a result of the excavations in catacombs, the early Christians' underground places of worship and burial in Jerusalem and Rome, saints' commemorations as feast days started to take place.

5. Origin of Seasons

Different liturgical seasons in the Church started to take place in relation to the celebrations of different feasts like Nativity-Epiphany, Pasch, Resurrection, Pentecost, Elia and Dedication of the Church. The arrangement of important feasts that formed different seasons of the whole year in the Jerusalem Church is found in the Armenian lectionary of Jerusalem, the earliest Church calendar, originally prepared by James and completed by Cyril in the fourth century,⁶³ as referred by Egeria/Etheria in her pilgrim travelogue diary 47.4-5 as follows:⁶⁴

⁶¹ R. H. Bainton, "The Origins of Epiphany," in *The Collected Papers in Church History*, Series 1: *Early and Medieval Christianity* (Boston, 1962) 22-38.

⁶² T. Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy*, 87.

⁶³ A. Renoux, *Le Codex Arménien Jerusalem* 121, PO 35.1 (Turnhout, 1969-1970), 175 ; PO 36.2 (Turnhout, 1971) 210-273; Id, "Un manuscrit de lectionnaire Arménien de Jérusalem," in *Le Muséon* 75 (1962) 361-385; Id, "Liturgie de Jérusalem et lectionnaires Arméniens," in Cassien-B. Botte, eds., *Le prière des heures*, Lex Orandi 35 (Paris, 1963) 167-199; Id, "Catéchèses mystérogiques dans l'organisation liturgique Hierosolymitaine du IV et V siècles," *Le Muséon* 78 (1965) 355-359 ; see P. Kannookadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary* (Rome, 1991) 4-5, 131.

⁶⁴ Egeria, *Egeria's Travels*, trans., J. Wilkinson (London, 1971) 146; P. Marvel, ed., and trans., *Journal de voyage (Itinéraire)*, SC 296 (Paris, 1982) 314-317.

1. The feast of Nativity-Epiphany and the period of Nativity-Epiphany
2. The feast of Pasch and the period of Great Fast and Holy Week
3. The Feast of Resurrection, Ascension and the period of Resurrection
4. The feast of Pentecost and the period of Apostles
5. The feast of the Cross and the period of Cross
6. The feast of Elia and the period of Elia
7. The feast of the Dedication of the Great Church at Jerusalem and the period of Dedication

V. Fifth to Sixth Centuries

The Christological controversies during this period led to serious theological discussions on the human and divine aspects of the incarnated Jesus and of Mary as the most blessed virgin who gave birth to Him. This led to the biblical calculation of the date of birth of Jesus on December 25, and to the establishment of different Marian Feasts with devotional celebrations. This development led to think about the sense of every feast as an occasion to experience God with us (*Emanuel* experience). As a result the memories of martyrs and saints,

the actual role models of Christ became the occasions to keep up Christ experience alive in the community.

1. Date of Christmas

The fifth century biblical calculation of the date of Christmas on December 25 by Augustine (d. 431),⁶⁵ John Chrysostom (5th c.),⁶⁶ and Cosmas Indicopleustes (d. 6th c.),⁶⁷ is mainly based on the two Gospel data: a) Elizabeth was in her sixth month when Mary conceived Jesus (Lk 1:36), b) Zachariah's entry to the temple to burn incense (Lk 1:9) i.e., once in the year on the 10th of the 7th month (Lev 16:29), a reckoning from Nisan. The 10th of the 7th month (October) + another 2, 3 or 7 days until Zachariah went to his house + 6 months = the beginning of the month of Nissan (March 25), Mary's conception day + 9 months, the period of pregnancy = December 25, Jesus' birthday.

2. Marian Feasts

After the Council of Ephesus (431) Marian feasts like *Theotokos*, Annunciation, Assumption (Dormition) and Nativity were introduced.⁶⁸ These feasts had their origin in the East. The emphasis was on the divine motherhood of Mary. Mary's importance is due to Christ, the second person of Trinity born from her.

⁶⁵ *De Trinitate* 5.9; PL 42, 894.

⁶⁶ *In diem Natalem D. N. Jesus Christi*; PG 49, 357-358.

⁶⁷ *Topographie chretienne*, ed. W. Wolska-Consus, SC 159 (Paris, 1970) 21-23.

⁶⁸ J. Kottackal, *Bhold Your Mother: Mariological Studies* (Kottayam, 1999) 82-91; C. Payngot, *Thirunalukal* (Malayalam, Kottayam, 1999) 317-339, 343-344.

a. Assumption

This feast on August 15 is called *Dormitio* (sleep) in Latin, and *Sunaya* (migration) in Syriac. Mary, who slept in the Lord after her life on earth, was migrated or transferred to heaven by her Son. This feast, started with the ancient custom of pilgrimage to the tomb of Mary and venerated in Jerusalem valley, was established with the consecration of a basilica over her tomb on August 15 in the fifth century.⁶⁹ Pope Sergius I (687-710) in the seventh century declared August 15 the feast day of the Assumption of Mary to heaven and Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) on 1 Nov 1950 defined the assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary a dogma of faith.

b. Nativity of Mary

This feast on September 8, started with the devotional visit to the birth place of Mary in Jerusalem, was established around the middle of the fifth century with the dedication of a Basilica in honour of Mary near to the present church of St. Anna in Jerusalem.⁷⁰

An eight-day fast in preparation for this feast is a special custom of the women folk in Kerala. According to tradition, in the ninth century Muslims won the battle over the Jews at Kodungallur and destroyed the whole city. Since the Christians were supporting Jews in the battle, an imminent attack on Christians was expected. Then the Christian women-folk vowed an eight-day fast asking Mary's help to safeguard their virginity from the alleged threat to their chastity by Muslims. In memory of the miraculous protection of Mary in this regard, they have still a great devotion to this fast. In certain places, even non-Christian women join this custom of fast and prayer.⁷¹

c. *Theotokos*

The fifth century controversy at the Council of Ephesus (431) over the union of the divinity and the humanity of Christ paved the way for the feast of *Theotokos* (God bearer) against *Christotokos* (Christ bearer) as the feast of the divine maternity of Mary at the conclusion of the Christmas octave.⁷²

⁶⁹ A. Raes, "Aux origines de la fête de L'Assomption en Orient", *OCP* 12 (1946) 262-263, 267; M. Jugie, "La fête de la Dormitio et de l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge en Orient et en Occident," in *L'Année Théologique* 4 (1943) 11-42.

⁷⁰ A. Baumstark, *Liturgie comparée* (Chevetonge, 1953) 210.

⁷¹ P. J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians* (London-Bombay, 1970) 93; Id., *Nammude Rithu* (Malayalam, Mannanam, 1958) 31-32; C. Payngot, *Thirunalukal*, 330.

⁷² W. J. Burghardt, "Theotokos: The Mother of God", in E. D. O'Connor, ed., *The Mystery of the Woman* (Notre Dame, 1956) 5-33; C. Feckes, *The Mystery of the Divine Motherhood*, trans., G. Smith (New York, 1941) 13-82; B. Botte, "Le lectionnaire arménien et la fête de la Théotocos à Jérusalem au V^e siècle," *Sacris Erudiri* 29 (1949) 111-122.

d. Annunciation

The origin of this feast on March 25, nine months before Christmas, started with the fifth century biblical calculation of Christmas date.⁷³ This date was chosen also in virtue of an old tradition that the creation of the world, the incarnation and the death of Christ occurred on this day.⁷⁴ Due to its occurrence during the period of Great Fast/Lent, the sixth council of Toledo (656) in Spain transferred it for the West to December 18 with the title the feast of the "Expectation of Blessed Mary," one week before the Christmas on December 25, celebrating the well advanced pregnancy of Blessed Lady, the daughter of David the king, awaiting with joy the arrival of the divine Son.

3. The Sense of Feasts

Another development of this period was the emergence of the sense of every feast as the *Emanuel* experience. A feeling of liberation, joy, peace, and satisfaction became the aim of festivities, where the stress was on the salvific time rather than the secular time. Then on the sense of *Anamnesis* (commemoration), signifying the real taking place of the past events in continuity of salvation history through liturgy, became the purpose of every celebration. As a result, martyrs and saints, as the actual representatives of Christ

events, became the real role models of our active participation in Paschal mysteries through their liturgical commemorations.

VI. Seventh to Thirteenth Centuries

Seventh to the tenth centuries are known as the dark ages of liturgy. As a result of cultural developments in Greco-Roman world, the liturgical drama started to take place. Sculptures, statues, and crucifixes were appeared in abundance. Rather than the living presence of Christ, His historical representation as a mediator was given much importance. This kind of approach to the person of Christ limited the scope of salvation to His historical works alone. But Christ is not merely a historic person, but as the Creator, Protector, and Saviour, He is in and above history. Both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the salvation history have to be given equal importance. In the Orient, this living presence of Christ was never missed. The liturgical development of this period in general was one of adaptations and appropriations without much creativeness except some at periphery level.

From the ninth century onwards in the West, they started to celebrate saints on Sundays. But in the East, maintaining the privileged position of Sunday as the day of the Lord, they celebrated this day only those feasts connected with the mysteries

⁷³ *In diem Natalem D. N. Jesus Christi*, PG 49, 357-358; *De Trinitate* 5, 9; PL 42, 894; *Topographie chretienne*, ed. W. Wolska - Consus, SC 159 (Paris, 1970) 21-23.

⁷⁴ C. W. Fields, "Annunciation: Liturgical Feast", in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 1 (Washington, 2003) 476.

of Christ,⁷⁵ because the Eucharist made Sunday a day of revelation or epiphany in the Church.⁷⁶

VII. Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries

Beginning of sanctuary system was the peculiarity of this period. Special Chapels or *Kapellas* for keeping the Eucharist after its celebration became a common phenomenon in the West. This was the result of Protestant reformation that denied the real presence of Christ in the Eucharistic Bread after the celebration of the Eucharist. In the West, the different ways of Eucharistic adorations and the establishment of a special day for the feast of the Eucharist were all the aftermaths of Protestantism. Council of Trent in the 16th century was an answer to Protestantism.

Conclusion

The formation of the General structure of the liturgical year in the Church took place in due course of centuries. The very first development in this regard was the first century development of Sunday worship as the day of the Lord stressing resurrection, the redemption of humanity. The thematic denominations of Sunday at this stage signify the gradual evolving of this day as the Christian weekly Pasch. Another outcome of this period was the Christian participation in Jewish feasts and their prayer system with a Christ orientation,

which helped them to understand the Old Testament prefigurations of the economy of salvation fulfilled in Christ.

During the second century, Pasch/Easter became the very first annual feast of Christianity celebrating the anniversary of resurrection of the Lord as the centre of salvation history. The controversy over the date of Christian annual Pasch/Easter met with a clash between the Jewish and non-Jewish traditions, as that of the East and West respectively. The establishment of Sunday as the day of Pasch/Easter was achieved as a Christian identity independent of Jewish tradition. The inclusion of two great luminaries, the sun and moon, in the fixing of the Paschal/Easter day on the Sunday (sun's day) following the full moon after March 21, the date of sun's crossing/reaching the equator, symbolically signified Christ as the everlasting light of the world.

The third century development of two days of fast on Good Friday and Holy Saturday as the Bride's (Church) mourning at her Groom's (Christ) departure, and its later extension to six days before Pasch stressed the process of Christian purification process in preparation of the great feast of redemption achieved through the death and resurrection of Christ. Another development of Wednesday and Friday fasts commemorating the suffering and death of Christ indicated the importance of those days in the weekly cycle. The

⁷⁵ P. G. Cobb, "The History of the Christian Year," in C. Jones et al, *Study of the Liturgy*, 405.

⁷⁶ P. Bradshaw, *Early Christian Worship*, 78.

martyrs' memory developed at this period paved the way for the commemoration of saints in the Church calendar as they are those who suffered with Christ carrying their own daily crosses of life and succeeded to become the true disciples of Christ witnessing Gospel values (Mt 10:38).

Independence of the Church from persecutions in the fourth century acquired the freedom of worship. New churches were built and different feasts of the Lord stressing the necessity of living up of paschal mysteries of Christ were observed to the formation of different liturgical seasons in the Church. The feast of Nativity-Epiphany with the mystery of revelation through incarnation formed the period of Nativity-Epiphany. The feast of Pasch with the mystery of suffering and death formed the period of Great Fast/Lent. The Feasts of Resurrection and Ascension with the mystery of redemption formed the period of Resurrection. The feast of Pentecost with the mystery of the power of the Holy Spirit formed the period of Apostles. The feast of the exaltation of the Cross with the mystery of the power of the Cross formed the period of Cross. The feast of Elia with the mystery of the Second Coming of Christ formed the period of Elia. The feast of the dedication of the Church with the mystery of the future glory of the Church in heaven formed the period of the dedication of the Church.

From fifth to sixth centuries, Christological controversies paved the way for the calculation of Christmas date and several feasts of Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God, as the perfect model of actualising Christ in life. This sense of feast to the experience of Christ defined *anamnesis* (commemoration) the real continuity of the economy of salvation in day to day life through liturgy. Not only the feasts of the Lord, but also the commemorations of martyrs and saints fulfilled the purpose of *anamnesis*, since they represented the successful models of actualising paschal mysteries in life.

The period of seventh to thirteenth centuries met with a serious setback in the field of liturgy. Seventh to tenth centuries are known as the dark ages of liturgy. As a reaction against iconoclasm, which condemned the making of any lifeless image of painting or statue,⁷⁷ many such historical representations appeared in abundance forgetting the divine sense of appeal to the eternal living presence of Christ. Christ can never be limited to history alone, because He is above history, the super power of control over everything. Hence, both vertical as well as horizontal dimensions of salvation history have to be equally stressed in the economy of salvation.

Protestant reformation from fourteenth to sixteenth centuries paved the

⁷⁷ A. Bryer, J. J. Herrin, eds., *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham, 1977); B. Alain, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago, 2000); T. F. X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm and the Carolingians* (Pennsylvania, 2009).

way for sanctuary system of maintaining special chapels for the preservation of the Eucharist representing the perpetual presence of Christ in the sacrament of Eucharist even after its celebration. This prompted to give shape to different types of Eucharistic devotions in the Latin Church.

In short, the major liturgical

developments that took place up to the sixteenth century are the basis for the present setting up of liturgical calendars in different Churches with their individual traits and theological approaches in various life situations both in the East⁷⁸ and West.⁷⁹ The seasonal structures of seven liturgical calendars existent today in different Churches are the following:⁸⁰

⁷⁸ [http://www. G:\Armenian Calendar.mht](http://www.G:\Armenian Calendar.mht); <http://www. G:\Byzantine Calendar.mht>; <http://www. G:\Coptic Calendar.mht>; <http://www. G:\East Syrian Calendar.mht>; <http://www.G:\Ethiopian Calendar.mht>; <http://www.G:\West Syrian Calendar.mht>

⁷⁹ <http://www.G:\The Latin liturgical year.htm>

⁸⁰ J. Moolan, *Paurastya Suriyani Sabbacalendar* (Malayalam, Kottayam, 2009) 98-109.

Present Church Calendars

I. East Syrians	II. W. Syrians	III. Armenians	IV. Byzantines	V. Coptics	VI. Ethiopians ⁸¹	VII. Latins
1. Annunciation-Nativity	1. Dedication of the Church	1. Epiphany	1. <i>Threyodio</i> (3 periods)	1. Three-day Fast	1. John Baptist (Aug. 1-7)	1. Advent
2. <i>Denhal</i> Epiphany	2. Annunciation-Nativity	2. Great Fast	(a) 4 weeks before Great Fast	2. Sunday before Great Fast	2. Zacharia (Aug. 8)	2. Christmas-Epiphany
3. Great Fast	3. Epiphany	3. Resurrection	(b) Great Fast	3. Great Fast	3. Fruition (Aug. 9-15)	3. Ordinary Weeks I
4. Resurrection	4. Three Sundays before Great Fast	4. Pentecost	(c) Holy Week	4. Resurrection	4. Construction of Jerusalem temple (Aug. 16)	4. Lent
5. Apostles	5. Great Fast	5. Transfiguration	2. <i>Pentecostario</i> (Pentecost)	5. Apostles	5. Cross (Aug. 17-25)	5. Resurrection
6. <i>Qaita</i> (Summer)	6. Resurrection	6. Assumption	(a) Resurrection		6. Blossoming (Aug. 26-Sept. 5)	6. Pentecost
7. Elia-Cross	7. Apostles	7. Cross	(b) Pentecost Sunday		7. Teaching (Sept. 6-Oct. 7/13)	7. Ordinary Weeks II
8. Moses	8. Cross	8. Advent	3. <i>Otoico</i> (period of 8 hymns)		8. Sunday of Bapt. Prophecy	
9. Dedication of the Church			(a) 1 st Sun. 1 st hymn (b) 2 nd Sun. 2 nd hymn and so on		9. Sunday of light	
					10. Sunday of Pastor	
					11. Spouse (Dec. 28)	
					12. Nativity (Dec. 25) Epipha. (Jan. 6)	
					13. Sunday of innocents I	
					4. Revelation, Great Fast, Resurrection	
					15. Teaching (May 17-25)	
					16. Faming (May 26-June 19)	
					17. Thunderbolt (June 20-July 10)	
					18. Assembly (July 11-28)	
					19. Sunrise (July 29-31)	

⁸¹ This calendar with fixed cycles is seemingly acclimatised with natural seasons.

The Exposition of the Church Services: A Brief Analysis

Dr. Francis Pittappillil

Introduction

In this article we would like to analyse the thematic shape of the 9th century liturgical commentary¹ called the *Exposition of the Church Services* (ECS) in a general manner. Since it is the first and integral commentary of the East Syrian liturgy after the work of Patriarch Išō'yahb III, it stands as the chief source to understand the symbolic and catechetical value of the East Syrian liturgy. The seven *memre* of the ECS comment on the various liturgical celebrations of the Church rather in a well developed form. As P. Yousif observes, ECS is truly a liturgical, theological, symbolical and spiritual treatise of the East Syrian tradition.²

1.2. The *Memre* of the ECS

The ECS consists of seven *memre* (treatises) which are rather complementary to each other and express some kind of unity between them. Each *memra* deals with the theological and liturgical aspects of the various services of the Church in a mystagogical manner. The first *memra* is about the Liturgical year, the second explains the *Ramša*, the third is of the *Lelya* and the *Sapra*, the fourth treats of the Holy Mysteries, the fifth is on Baptism, the sixth deals with the Consecration of the Church and commemoration of Saints, and the last *memra* is about Funeral and Marriage Services. Let us have a brief glance at each one of them.

1. The authorship of the ECS is a problem for all the liturgical scholars and students. Analysing the previous studies on the ECS, we can see that the liturgical scholars are inclined to propose three possible authors namely, George of Arbel and Mosul, Patriarch Išō Bar Nun and Metropolitan Abdišo Bar Bahriz. The external and internal evidences prompt us to think that Abdišo Bar Bahriz, who lived in the 9th century is the most probable author of ECS. But it is not a definitive conclusion, and therefore, it must be received with great caution. Therefore, for surety, we may speak about the author of the ECS as Anonymous Author. Cf. *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticanae de Scriptoribus Syris*, I-II-III, 1-2, J.S. ASSEMANI, ed. & trans., Romae 1719-1728; repr. Hildesheim/New York 1975, 518/540;174: 167; R.H. CONNOLLY, "Preface to Latin Text" I, II, 1-2; EMLEK, *Mysterienfeier* = I. EMLEK, *Mysterienfeier der Ostsyrischen Kirche im 9. Jahrhundert. Die Deutung der göttlichen Liturgie nach dem 4. Traktat einer anonymen Liturgieerklärung*, Münster 2004, 33.

² P.YOUSIF, "Giorgio di Arbela, Pseudo (Sec IX-X)", in *DEOC*, FARRUGIA, ed., Roma (2000) 341.

1.2.1. First Memra: The Liturgical Year

The first *memra* contains twenty four chapters which are mainly about the fixation

of the liturgical year.³ It speaks about the liturgical year and the lectionary system of

³ The English translation of the titles of each chapter of the *ECS* from Syriac is my own. I made the translation based on the edited Syriac text of the *ECS* published by R.H. Connolly. Cf. *ECS* I, II.

The Liturgical commentary begins with a long heading and an apology. It is as follows:

Title: In the power of the adorable Trinity, the Lord of the goodness, we begin to write the commentary of all the ecclesiastical Services and causes, various sorts of divine dispensation of the Feasts of the Lord, composed by a loving person of the doctrine.

First. Titles of the chapters of the first *memra*.

Apology to those who have asked the author to write.

Chapter 1: What is the reason for writing of the years called the *Chronicle*, and what is the utility of it in the Church?

Chapter 2: Why did Eusebius order to begin the year in October (*Tišri I*) and not in April (*Nisan*) on the day the world is created?

Chapter 3: Why did Eusebius calculate the year with Solar and Lunar months and why did he divide it into weeks; and why didn't he follow one numbering instead of three traditions?

Chapter 4: Why is it that the beginning of the year runs from October, and that there is no Feast from October to December (*Kanun*)? Blessed Išo'yahb discarded the Annunciation and the beginning of the *Penqitâ* until December: and he did not make it (to be) in the beginning of the year?

Chapter 5: How clear is it that the year begins with October, and that in November (*Tišri II*) dispensation of Moses begins, and how clear is it that this *Septenariy* of Moses is the first of the *Septenariy*s?

Chapter 6: When was the announcement about John's birth; and when was his birth; and how many years did the Old Testament and the offering (*qurbana*) of the Law rule in Jerusalem?

Chapter 7: When was the announcement of the birth of our Lord; and on which day? And when was He born and was it on 25th of December (*Kanun*)?

Chapter 8: Why do the evangelists change the genealogy of Joseph, husband of Mary; and why does one put his genealogy from Natan, the son of David, and the other from Solomon, the son of David?

Chapter 9: Why did the angel speak to Zacharia with indignation while to Mary with calm: and Zacharia, since he said "how could I know?" was deprived of speech and Mary was instructed mildly?

Chapter 10: Why does Matthew say that Joseph goes to Nazareth due to the reign of King Archelaos in Judea, however Luke, stating from the Annunciation, says that the angel Gabriel was sent to a village called Nazareth?

Chapter 11: Did our Lord eat flesh or not, while He was in the world?

Chapter 12: From where does anyone know that our Lord was baptized on sixth January (*Kanun I*)? And which was the day of his baptism? And when did John come to the Jordan?

Chapter 13: When was the fasting of our Lord, in which period of the year and in which month? And how long did He wait from the baptism until He fasted?

Chapter 14: When did our Lord enter Jerusalem: and in which time of the year, and on which day? And from where did the young donkey come on which our Lord rode? And again what is the meaning of the word *Hosanna*?

Chapter 15: Which is the day of *Pesba* (Passover) in the year in which our Lord suffered, and which day in the month of Solar and Lunar? And why is it called "Friday" (*'rubthâ*) while in the Scripture it is called the sixth day? Why did the Jews send one prisoner to be crucified and set another free? Why did we differ in the Lunar month with regard to the 40th day?

the East Syrian Church.⁴ In the first four chapters, the Author clarifies that Eusebius⁵ determined the beginning of the year with October (*Tišri I*) and not with April (*Nisan*). At the 14th of Nisan, the lamb is no more slaughtered in Egypt, because now Christ, the true lamb, is sacrificing himself. Our Lord was crucified in the sixth hour when the people were preparing for the evening *Pesha*. He was put in the tomb as everybody ate *Pesha*.

In the fifth chapter, the Author says that before Išo'yahb III, the liturgical year was based on the Jewish calendar whose

liturgical year begins with November (*Tišri II*) known as the divine dispensation of Moses.⁶ But Išo'yahb III placed the period of the Nativity at the beginning and the period of the Dedication of the Church at the end of the liturgical year.⁷ It symbolises the beginning of the divine dispensation with the season of the Nativity and the conclusion of it with the Dedication of the Church.

In chapter eight, the Author describes that the evangelist Matthew (Mt 1, 6) follows Solomon's line to speak about the generation of Joseph. But Luke (Lk 3, 31)

Chapter 16: What is the reason for the Feast of *Pesha* to occur on the Sabbath (Saturday) in that year, and was it on Friday? And what is the symbolic meaning of it?

Chapter 17: Why don't we celebrate the day of the Annunciation in March (*Adar*); (Why don't we celebrate) and the day of the entrance and the circumcision of our Lord in the temple like the Chalcedonians celebrate?

Chapter 18: Why did the Resurrection of our Lord occur on Sunday? And what is the meaning of the words, "He was in the house of death for three days", whereas Friday and Sunday are only partly counted?

Chapter 19: When was the Ascension of our Lord; and which was the month and which was the day? And why did He remain forty days from His Resurrection till His Ascension?

Chapter 20: How many times did our Lord appear to His disciples from His Resurrection to His Ascension?

Chapter 21: How can we reckon our resurrection from among the dead? And how can we know it by natural reason and without the Scripture?

Chapter 22: What is the reason that our Lord after His resurrection did not show Himself to the Jews who crucified Him in order to confound them; but to His disciples He showed himself to confirm them and showed his hands and feet, and also He ate with them?

Chapter 23: How could we reckon the fate of the son of perdition (Anti Christ)? And why at the day of the resurrection, he will not find the mercy which shall be accorded even to demons and evil men?

Chapter 24: When was the Cross found out; and on which day and how many (days) in the Lunar (calendar)?

End of the first *memra*.

⁴ For the further study on the East Syrian Lectionary Cf. MACOMBER, "Chaldean Lectionary", 483; KANNOOKADAN, *East Syrian Lectionary*, 160-161; BURKITT, *Lectionary System*, 6-36; "Lectionary of Jerusalem", 174-183.

⁵ ECS I, 20/19; 20/22; 24/22; 77/63; 78/64.

⁶ The Syriac calendar distinguishes between *Tišri I* as equal to October and *Tišri II* as equal to November; and *Kanun I* as December and *Kanun II* as January.

⁷ ECS I, 28/25.

takes Natan's line to speak about the same Joseph. The Author paints vividly in the ninth and tenth chapters the right and false thoughts over the message of the angels to Mary (Lk 1, 26-38) and Zacharia (Lk 1, 5-25), and the visit of the Magi (Mt 2, 1-12). Chapters eleven and twelve describe the date and day of the baptism of Jesus, the role of John the Baptist in the baptism of our Saviour and the question of whether Jesus ate flesh.

In chapters thirteen to sixteen, the Author speaks about the celebration of the Pre-sanctified liturgy without full Mystery in relation to the Lenten season. About the Pre-sanctified liturgy, he says:

"But it is a fact that the days of fasting witness to the Passion of the Lord, for there is genuflection in those days and no full Mystery with consecration is celebrated in them."⁸

According to the Author, the lenten days are the time to remember the

passion and death of Christ. Therefore, the Eucharist is celebrated without the consecration of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. The ECS affirms that the fast of the Great Lent is 40 days and on the day of the Passover (Maundy Thursday) it is completed since the reckoning of the East Syrian Lenten season consists of six weeks of fasting, excluding Sundays, plus four days of Holy Week. To confirm his position, he quotes the following authorities: The regulation of Nicea, Patriarch Girwargis I (661-680), Eusebius of Caesaria, Theodoret of Cyrus, the books of Jubilees and Išō'yahb III.⁹ From chapter seventeen onwards, the Author makes use of philosophical and natural sources to explain the theme of christology and eschatology. He clarifies that the 'Son of Perdition' would not find mercy on the day of judgement.

1.2.2. Second *Memra*: Service of *Ramša*

The second *memra* comprises 21 chapters¹⁰ in which the Anonymous Author

⁸ ECS I, 62/52.

⁹ ECS I, 61-63/51-52; EMLEK, "Welcher Quellen", 336.

¹⁰ Chapter 1: Why do we worship towards the East and not to Jerusalem where the prophets worshipped and from where did the redemption come to us?

Chapter 2: Why do we divide the church partly into the Sanctuary and partly into the *Hykla* and the place of women? And why did Išō'yahb command that the Baptistry should be on the south side?

Chapter 3: Why do we use David (Psalms) more than all the other Holy Books for Feasts and for everyday? And why do we divide it into *hulale* and *marmyatha*? And what does *hulale* symbolize and why do we break *hulale* placing *mawtbha* in the middle?

Chapter 4: Why did the Fathers command that the prayer should be prayed three times a day, namely, *Ramša*, *Lelya* and *Sapra*? And why did they command that the Service of the Mysteries should be celebrated on Sundays and Feasts; why did during the Lent and in the Passion, there are three hours and the *Suba'a*.

Chapter 5: Why did blessed Išō'yahb III command that the deacons and the subdeacons should go the church at noon before the Feast day and should clean the candles, and decorate the church with beautiful garments: with the other things that the service commands?

speaks about the importance of the East, the structure of the church and the service of the *Ramša*.¹¹ The first chapter speaks about the importance of the East for the prayer based on the Scripture and the natural science. According to him, the East is the best and suitable side for prayer and

he gives cosmological, christological, eschatological and soteriological reasons for it.¹² The second chapter describes the structure of the church and its division in relation to the divine economy of Christ. In the third chapter, the Author articulates the symbolic and theological meaning and

Chapter 6: What is the significance of each order in the Church: from Patriarch to the readers and even the baptized? Why are they so arranged one after another?

Chapter 7: Why do some churches say "Our Father in heaven" at the beginning of the service, and some of them do not say it? And still there are (some churches) where the priest prays before "Our Father in heaven", and there are those (that pray) after "Our Father in heaven"?

Chapter 8: Why did our Lord teach this prayer to His disciples, and what is the meaning of it? Why did it please Timothy to add this prayer to the *qanone* of Išo'yahb?

Chapter 9: What does the *Marmitâ* signify at the beginning of the service of *Ramša*? What is its mystery, and why do some (churches) use one *Marmitâ*, and some two?

Chapter 10: What is the (meaning of) the '*Onitâ d-Ayk Etra* and why do we say it (only) on Sundays and Feasts, and not on all days?

Chapter 11: What typifies '*Onitâ d-Lakhu Mara* and why does the deacon say now, "Peace be with us"?

Chapter 12: Why do we say *Šurraya* after the *Lakhu Mara* and on Feasts an '*Onitâ* instead of *Šurraya* and again then "To You Lord, I call You" and after then *Šurraya* and an '*Onitâ*, and what is the meaning of the word *Šurraya*?

Chapter 13: Why does the deacon go forth after the *Šurraya*, and read *karozutâ*; what typifies it here and why do the people answer as they are told.

Chapter 14: Why does he say that the (second) deacon goes forth (*Bema*) and proclaims another *karozutâ* and why do they embrace each other who ascend and descend?

Chapter 15: What is the meaning of the Canon *Qaddisa*, and what does it typify, and why it is said at the end of the service?

Chapter 16: Why does the deacon command after the *Qaddisa*, "Bow your heads", and why are the veils closed?

Chapter 17: Why do they say here the '*Onitâ d-Basliqe* when the service has been completed; and what is the (meaning of) the word "*Basliqe*"? And why do they say it on Feasts before the *Marmitâ* and then the '*Onitâ*?

Chapter 18: Why do some say "Our Father in heaven" at the end of the service and some do not and some say this without the *Qanona*?

Chapter 19: Why do we say every day the '*Onitâ d-Sahdhe* in the *Ramša* and in the *Sapra* and not (say) on Sundays, Feasts, in Lent and for the Passion?

Chapter 20: Why are the *Šurraya* of Sundays recited in the seventh cycle, and on Fridays in the third and the rest of the ordinary days only in the second?

Chapter 21: Why don't we kneel on Feasts and Sundays and why do we say "with joy and happiness" instead of "with repentance and diligence"?

End of the second *memra*.

¹¹ The word *Ramša* derives from the Syriac word *rmash* which means time of sunset, the evening time-vesper time. Cf. PUDICHERY, *Ramsa*; It is a prayer just before the sunset. In it, someone thanks God for protecting him throughout the day, and asks for protection for the coming night ordained for repose.

¹² ECS I, 111/89.

significance of the East Syrian Psalter (Psalms of David) and its divisions. According to him, they are more used in the Church, since they contain hymns proper to each and every situation of the faithful. Psalms are organised into twenty *bulale* plus one of Moses and into sixty *marmyatâ* with a symbolic significance.¹³ He explains the various times of the prayer, namely, *Ramša*, *Lelya*, *Sapra* and *Suba'a* in the ensuing chapter. The fifth chapter explicates the difference in the authority of various ministers to enter and to serve in the different parts of the church. In the sixth chapter, the Author describes the typological meaning of the ecclesiastical hierarchy from the readers up to the Patriarch. According to him, Christ exercised various orders during His public life. The Apostles were also appointed to different orders of ministry from the reader up to the Patriarch. He quotes St. Ephrem and other Church Fathers in order to prove that there are four Patriarchates and two Catholicates in the Church.

In the seventh and eighth chapters, the Author enlightens us on the problem regarding the recitation of the "Our Father" at the beginning and at the end of the liturgical Services. He points out that Išo'yahb III did not command that the "Our Father" should be recited at the beginning of the Service. The Author

favours those who say that the 'Lord's Prayer' should take precedence to the priestly prayer.¹⁴ Chapter nine explains the meaning and number of *marmyatâ* in the celebration of the *Ramša*.¹⁵ Chapters ten to twelve clarify the meaning of the hymn *Ayk Etra* and they are recited only on Sundays and Feast days because the bishop attends only for the *Ramša* of these days.¹⁶ He explains the significance of the procession from the Sanctuary to the *Bema* with regard to the hymn *Lakhu Mara*.¹⁷ Chapters thirteen to fourteen articulate the meaning and significance of the *Karozutâ* and its rituals. Chapter fifteen narrates the history, meaning and significance of the Canon "*Qaddiša Alaha*" (*Trisagion*). Chapter sixteen mentions that the deacon exhorts the people to bow their heads for the imposition of hands and for the reception of the blessing. Then with the prayer of the inclination, they close the veil of the Sanctuary and the Service is completed. Chapter seventeen describes the meaning and the relevance of the recitation of the '*Onitâ d-Basliqe*' after the completion of the Service. Chapter eighteen highlights the problem of the recitation of the "Our Father" at the end of the Service with and without the *qanona*. Chapter nineteen speaks about the recitation of the '*Oniatâ*' of the martyrs during the celebration of the *Ramša* and *Sapra* of the ordinary days

¹³ ECS I, 117-118/93-94.

¹⁴ ECS I, 152-153/121; EMLEK, "Welcher Quellen", 341.

¹⁵ ECS I, 154-163/123-130.

¹⁶ ECS I, 164/131.

¹⁷ ECS I, 166-170/135.

and its introduction in the Church of the East. Chapters twenty and twenty-one describe the number of *Šurra* on various occasions and the reasons for not kneeling on joyous occasions.

1.2.3. Third Memra: Services of *Lelya* and *Sapra*

This *memra* consists of nine chapters¹⁸ which narrate primarily the services of *Lelya* and *Sapra*. In the first two chapters, the Anonymous Author describes the reasons for the variation in the number of the *hulale* at the initial psalmody of the Sunday *Lelya*.¹⁹ The Author gives his own liturgical explanation about the *Sapra* in the third chapter.²⁰ According to the ECS, the

anthem of *Sapra* ('*Onita d-Sapra*') indicates the judgment of creation by Christ, and for this reason they draw back the (altar) veils at this point, and the censer goes out. The veils drawn back indicate that all things are laid bare at the judgement of our Lord, and there is nothing that is hidden before him".²¹ The question proposed in the fourth chapter has two parts: the first part is about the symbolism of the Offices of the week days; *Ramša*, *Lelya* and *Sapra*. The second part explains the reasons, for the absence of the bishop for the prayers of week days. He does not come to the prayers because his coming symbolizes the epiphany of our Lord. On the days of Feasts and Sundays, the singing of the hymn of vigil

¹⁸ Chapter 1: Why is it that in the *Lelya* of Sundays, some use five *hulale* at the first *mawtbha* and some six and some seven *marmiyatā* with chants?

Chapter 2: What symbolizes last *mawtbha*? Why some use only one *hulala* with chants in *Marmitā*, and some several and some nothing other than the *Qala d-šabra*?

Chapter 3: Why does Išo'yahb command that the women after the last *mawtbha* should not sing but should say a *memra*? What typifies the service *Sapra*?

Chapter 4: What typifies the service of ordinary days, *Ramša*, *Lelya* and *Sapra*, and why doesn't the bishop come forth to the service on ordinary days?

Chapter 5: Why do we use the whole David (psalms) in the *Lelya* of the Feasts, and again we arrange them in the following division: first five *hulale* and then the '*Oniatā*', and again we divide six (*hulale*), and again four '*Oniatā* and then we divide two, and then three *hulale* and '*Oniatā*, and finally the last, and then follow *Qala d-šabra*; and why is the last called *d-beth qatholike*, and what is the meaning of this word?

Chapter 6: Why do we kneel during the *Qala d-šabra* of the Nativity and the Epiphany, and not for all the Feasts; what is the interpretation of the word *Qala d-šabra*?

Chapter 7: Why didn't Išo'yahb arrange any '*Onite* to the *Ramša* and *Lelya* of the Sunday of the entrance into the Fast? But he prescribed ('*Onite*) to the *Sapra* and wrote one for the Mysteries and even the one to the *Ramša* of the Monday of the entrance into the Fast?

Chapter 8: Why do we use nothing other than the *hulala*, *Qala d-šabra* on the Sunday of the Resurrection and we do not make vigil according to the rite of Feasts; and why do we recite only one '*Onitā* in the *Lelya* and not three?

Chapter 9: What typifies the *karoawtā* (litanies) of the *Sapra* during the days of Lent?
End of the third *memra*.

¹⁹ EMLEK, "Welcher Quellen", 346.

²⁰ The word *Sapra* comes from the Syriac word *spar* which means "early morning" or "daybreak".

²¹ ECS I, 214/173.

(*Qala d-šabra*) symbolizes the Epiphany. It does not happen on the week days. Chapter five gives answers to the questions regarding the meaning and manner of the recitation of the whole psalm in the *Lelya* of the Feast days and the meaning of the word *qatholike*. The Christological dogma of the Christian faith is well expressed in this chapter as follows:

One says that Christ is God without flesh; another says he is an ordinary man, again another deviate the term for Christ. But our formula is Christ is of two natures and two hypostases (*qnome*) is one truth".²²

In the sixth chapter, the Author clarifies the reasons for kneeling during the

Qala d-šabra of the Nativity and the Epiphany and the meaning of the term *Qala d-šabra*. Chapters seven and eight make clear about the differences in the recitation of the Psalmody at the beginning of the Lenten season and at Easter. Chapter nine explains the meaning of the *Karozawtâ* for the *Sapra* for the period of Lent.

1.2.4. Fourth Memra: Service of the Mysteries

The fourth *memra* is about the service of the Mysteries which is the essence of all the other six *memre*. It is explained in 30 chapters.²³ In the first chapter the Author reminds us of the command of Patriarch Išo'yahb III that the Holy Mysteries should

²² ECS I, 229/184.

²³ Chapter 1: Why did Išo'yahb command that the Mysteries should be celebrated at the third hour? And what is the meaning of this name "Mysteries" (*Raze*)?

Chapter 2: Why do we recite the *marmytâ* at the beginning of the Mysteries, and after that the *Lakhu Mara* and then the Holy?

Chapter 3: What typifies the variation in the Sanctuary, "I will confess to you in the great Church"?

Chapter 4: Why do they read the Law and the Prophets and then they stand up and say the *Šurraya*?

Chapter 5: Why does the deacon take the Epistle and come out from the Sanctuary? And why some bring it out through the great door and some through the small? And why do the deacons go out before him until the *Bema*?

Chapter 6: Why does he (Išo'yahb) say, "When he reads three verses of the Epistle, the deacon who orders descends and those with him to the door of the *Bema* and they bow towards the *Bema*, and the presbyter stands and bows and enters with them"?

Chapter 7: Why after having finished the Epistle, does the deacon say, "Be you silent"; and a cantor (*amora*) comes out and recites *Zummara*?

Chapter 8: Why did Išo'yahb command that the presbyter who comes out to take the Gospel should wear a *Payna*, but the deacons wear *kothinas*; and they take the lights and thuribles and go forth before him; and the subdeacons having left their places come to meet him taking the lamps?

Chapter 9: Why in the days of the Passion and in the baptism, does the deacon say before the Gospel: "Be still and silent" and not, "Let us stand ready"?

Chapter 10: Why does a presbyter approach and lift the Gospel together with the one who reads it? And why after having read the Gospel, does the bishop kiss it and the archdeacon take it and put it upon the altar (*Madbha*)? And why do some kiss the Gospel when it comes forth and others do not kiss until it descends from the *Bema*?

Chapter 11: What typifies the homily (*amorutâ*) after the Gospel? And why does the deacon says here "Sit and be silent"?

Chapter 12: What do typify the ‘*Karozawtâ*’ (litanies) here? And why he, who stands on duty, proclaims the first one; and he who reads the Epistle the second?

Chapter 13: Why do two deacons carry the *Sleewa* (the Cross) and the Gospel; and why do those who order, go out before them? And what does this saying mean: “Those who do not receive the baptism”: and why when they say “Go out hearers”, do the deacons go out and close the veil, the subdeacons (go out) the doors of the *Hykla*, and the religious women (*Bnath Qyama*) the doors of women?

Chapter 14: What does the sitting (*mawtbha*) of the bishop and the presbyters at the *Bema* during the ‘*Onitâ d-Raze*’ signifies? And why does one of the presbyters take the staff of the bishop and stand in the place of the archdeacon? And why do four deacons bring out water and towels, two for the bishop and two for the priests?

Chapter 15: Why when they say ‘*Onitâ (d-Raze)*’ in the *Hykla*, do the deacons repeat it in the Sanctuary? And why did he (Išo‘yahb) say that they set the Mysteries in order? And why didn’t he describe how the bread is to be baked and the wine mixed?

Chapter 16: Why when they say the “Glory” do they roll up the veil; and why do the deacons go out and lead the priests in? And all the things that are observed here, explain to me.

Chapter 17: Why do they say here “We believe” (“symbol of faith”)?

Chapter 18: Why does the deacon here approach the door of the Sanctuary? And why does he (Išo‘yahb) say, “He who reads the Epistle”? And why do four deacons approach the *Madbha* (altar), two from this side and two from that side, and serve?

Chapter 19: Why when they say, “We believe”, do they bow at the mention of the Father and Son and Spirit; and (why) also when they say “For all” (Catholicos), and “All us”, do they bow towards the *Madbha* (altar) and to each other?

Chapter 20: Why does the (deacon) say “The priest approaches”? And why now does he say, “He offers the *qurbana* (offering) of such one”? And what does the deacon mean to indicate, when he approaches the door of the Sanctuary? And all things that are to be performed here, explain to me.

Chapter 21: Why does the priest now say the *qanona* “Of grace” and those things which are now performed?

Chapter 22: Why does the deacon at the *Bema* now say “Peace with us”? And (why) does he (Išo‘yahb) not say that the deacon who made the proclamation says (this): while we say that the deacon who made the proclamation says (it)?

Chapter 23: Why does the priest now begin quietly? And what does this *G’hantâ* typify?

Chapter 24: Why now does the deacon who was at the *Bema* say, “In your mind pray”, and then “In silence and in fear”? And why does this *G’hantâ* have two “peaces”?

Chapter 25: Why does the priest here say again: “The grace of our Lord”? And what does the proclamation mean, when the deacon proclaims, “Let us all”? And why doesn’t the deacon proclaim it at the *Bema*? And all the things which are to be performed here, explain to me?

Chapter 26: Why do they say on Feasts, “You are terrible” and on the Epiphany, a *hulala*? And why don’t they say it in all Sundays? And why does the deacon say the “Glorify” and they say the *Unaya* at the *Bema*? And what is the mystery contained in the *unaya* and *bate*: “your body and your blood” and all things that are placed here?

Chapter 27: Why does the deacon now proclaim again at the door of the Sanctuary: “Let us all then”? And what typifies the prayers of the priest, and what do all the things that are performed here until the completion of the Mysteries signify?

Chapter 28: Why don’t the deacons in the Sanctuary genuflect for the whole of the service?

Chapter 29: Why in Passion and in the Fast periods, doesn’t the deacon say before the Gospel: “Let us stand ready”, but: “Be silent”? And why don’t they read the readings of the Law and Prophets during the baptism and the Mysteries of (Holy) Saturday?

Chapter 30: Why do they go outside during the *Sapra* of the Sunday of the Resurrection and they give the peace to one another. And they say peace of the Resurrection or the *Sogitâ*?

End of the fourth *memra*.

be celebrated at the third hour. In the second and third chapters, he explains the reasons for reciting *marmyatâ* at the beginning of the Holy Mysteries, then the *Lakhu Mara* and then *Qaddiša Alaha*.

The fourth chapter describes the meaning of two Old Testament readings and the hymn *Šurraya*. Chapters five and six articulate the reading of the Epistle and its various rituals and symbolisms. According to him, it explains the nativity of Jesus dramatically. Chapter seven highlights the hymn *Zummara* and its significance in the celebration. Chapters eight to ten explain the preparation and manner of the Gospel reading. In chapters eleven and twelve, the Author depicts the meaning of the homily and the sitting of the people during the homily. According to him, the *Karozutâ* articulates the redemptive and eschatological themes. Chapter thirteen narrates the rite of dismissal of the catechumens from the celebration of the Mysteries and the role of the deacons, subdeacons and religious women in it. Chapters fourteen and fifteen explain the meaning of the hymn *Onitâ d-Raze* and the various liturgical actions taking place during this time. In the ensuing chapters from fifteen to nineteen, the Author clarifies the liturgical instructions of Išō'yahb III regarding the preparation of the Mysteries and the great entrance from the *Bema* to the Sanctuary. Then there is a commentary on the "symbol of faith", "sign of Peace" and the reading of the 'Book of the First Born'. Every diaconal exhortation is paraphrased especially in chapter twenty. The next part is the most

important part of the fourth *memra*, namely, the *Anaphora* which is distributed in chapters twenty-one to twenty-five. It focuses on the prefatory dialogue, the anamnesis of the salvation plan in the OT, the *Qaddiša* (Holy), the anamnesis of the redemptive plan in the NT, the diaconal exhortation to respect and honour the Mysteries, the epiclesis, doxology and the *amen* of the faithful. The rite of breaking, kissing and singing are regarded as the Pre-communion rites.

Chapter twenty-five has two parts: the first part narrates the invitation of the celebrant towards the people for Holy Communion and the second part articulates the manner and order of Holy Communion. Chapter twenty-six narrates the prescription of Timothy I who commands that at the end of the Holy Mysteries, the "Our Father" should be recited. It follows the explanation of the confessional actions, the formula "the Holy is", the proclamation of the Lord's Prayer and Communion. The conclusion of the Holy Mysteries will be in Chapter twenty-seven under special consideration of the "Our Father", the final blessing and the end of the Mystery celebration. Chapters twenty-eight to thirty are regarded as appendices. The question and answer, why does the deacon make no genuflections during the Holy Mysteries in the sanctuary is treated in chapter twenty-eight. In chapter twenty-nine, the Author clarifies that during the Holy Saturday and the baptism, there is no reading from the Law and the Prophets. Chapter thirty describes the special rites in connection with the Easter Sunday.

1.2.5. Fifth *Memra*: Service of Baptism

The fifth *memra* deals with the service of baptism and has nine chapters.²⁴ In the first chapter Anonymous Author justifies the liturgical arrangement of Išo'yahb III regarding the baptism on the evening of the Resurrection.²⁵ He describes how Išo'yahb III was ardent to disassociate the Christian baptism from the baptism of Jesus by placing it at Easter, rather than at the Epiphany.²⁶ The Author makes use of Pauline theology to affirm baptism as a sign of spiritual death and rebirth in Christ.²⁷ In the second chapter, the Author describes the prescription of Išo'yahb III that the

baptismal candidates should inscribe their names before the priest. The celebration of the incorporation into the body of Jesus begins with the enrolment of the names of the candidates for the baptism in the middle of the Easter period of fasting and reaches its climax on the Easter night, in which the sacrament of baptism is given and the newly baptized partake in the body and blood of Jesus Christ.²⁸ In the third chapter, the Author explains the reason for the prescription of Išo'yahb III about the entrance of the catechumens into the Baptistry at the beginning of the last week (Holy Week). The Author says that during Holy Week the candidates 'are exorcised'

²⁴ Chapter 1: Why is it that, while our Lord was baptized on the Epiphany, Išo'yahb arranged the baptism on the evening (*Ramša*) of the Resurrection?

Chapter 2: Why did he (Išo'yahb) command that the catechumens should come and inscribe their names on the Monday of the middle of the fasting period; (Why do) the priest and two deacons with him come out of the Baptistry from this Monday and lay hands on the catechumens everyday during *Ramša* and *Sapra* till their baptism?

Ch. 3: Why do they (catechumens) enter into the Baptistry from the beginning of the last week? And (why does) he again command that the priest goes out daily to the baptismal candidates in the evening (*Ramša*)? And what is the meaning of the word "Sponsor"?

Ch. 4: Why did he (Išo'yahb) say, "The priest should come out in bright vestments with candles and incense"; and (why) the other things that he determines during this time?

Ch. 5: Why, when from one horn, we sign, anoint, baptize and seal, we don't do it with one but with four? if the oil in the horn is holy, why is it necessary that the priest consecrates another oil; And regarding the water of baptism: what is the need of signing with oil from the horn, when the Spirit will descend upon the waters?

Ch. 6: Why did he (Išo'yahb) say, "The candidates of baptism are signed and their sponsors should impose new clothes on them"? And why did he say, "They have to enter the Baptistry now"?

Ch. 7: Why do they read the Gospel in the Baptistry? Why do some Churches read (the Gospel) inside (the Baptistry)? And why do others read it in the church?

Ch. 8: Why did he (Išo'yahb) command that the water from the font should be poured before the candidates are signed? And what is the meaning of the last imposition of hands: and everything that is performed here?

Ch. 9: Why does the priest baptize by covering his head with linen clothes? And why does he uncover the head when he is to consecrate (the Mysteries)?

End of the fifth *memra*.

²⁵ ECS II, 96-97/87-88.

²⁶ ECS II, 100/90-91; BROCK, "Baptismal Anointings", 27-37.

²⁷ ECS II, 96/87. According to I. Emlek, the "baptismal catechesis" (Rom 6, 3-11) of St. Paul is the model for the Anonymous Author to explain his baptismal theology. EMLEK, *Mysterienfeier*, 58.

²⁸ LEONHARD, "Die Initiation", 331.

only once daily – in the evening.²⁹ It is due to the fact that while John baptized, he observed the laws of the Old (Testament) and fulfilled both the Old and the New.

The fourth chapter explains the entrance of the priest in splendid vestments accompanied by two deacons with candles and incense which signifies the apparition of God to Abraham and to Moses and the deacons represent the angels.³⁰ The fifth chapter is especially concerned with four stages of baptism and its significance in relation to the OT and the NT.³¹ The sixth chapter articulates the theme of signing the candidates with oil and the role of the sponsors in the ceremony of baptism. He writes:

“Also in fact, and in this point, the sponsors come with the baptismal candidates; they sponsor their souls to the priest that they shall be without defect in their service. And those sponsors are placed

in the place of the holy Apostles who sponsored the nations and granted to them the forgiveness of sins.”³²

The seventh chapter highlights the different traditions regarding the Gospel reading. Some read it in the Baptistry and some others do it in the church. The eighth chapter explains the manner and meaning of the pouring of the baptismal water upon the candidates.³³ The ninth chapter narrates the meaning of the covering of the head of the priest when he baptizes and he uncovers it during the consecration of the Mysteries. The *ECS* sees the covering of the head as a symbol of death and its removal as a symbol of liberation from death.

1.2.6. Sixth Memra: Service of the Consecration of Church

The sixth *memra* which contains eight questions³⁴ speaks about the

²⁹ ECS II, 100/91; LEONHARD, “Gestalt und Deutung der christlichen Initiation”, 127-128.

³⁰ ECS II, 98/89.

³¹ KADICHEENI, *Mystery of Baptism*, 88-93; BROCK, “Baptismal Anointings”, 35.

³² ECS II, 100/91; LEONHARD, “Die Initiation”, 341.

³³ LEONHARD, “Gestalt und Deutung der christlichen Initiation”, 130-131.

³⁴ Ch. 1: Since the Consecration of the Church precedes all the Services and even the baptism; Why did blessed Išo'yahb assign the Annunciation as the beginning of the Codex of the Offices (*Penqitâ*) and introduce baptism at the Resurrection and assigns the Consecration of the Church as the end of the whole cycle (*Hudra*)? And what is the meaning of the word ‘consecration’ (*qudašâ*)?

Ch. 2: Why did he command that the consecration of the Church should be on Sunday? And why did he say that “the church should be decorated with ‘white clothes’, and should not hang up the veils on the Sanctuary”?

Ch. 3: Why do they constitute the altar in front of the *Qestroma*? And why do some cover it from the beginning and some do not cover it until it is consecrated? And why do they wash it when it is too old and not if it is new?

Ch. 4: Why did he command that the presbyters and the deacons should remain in the Sanctuary whereas the people stay in the *Hykla*?

Ch. 5: Why do they enter again into the Sanctuary at nocturne and recite six *marmyatâ* whereas the people remain on the *Qestroma*? And why don't they go forth to the *Bema*?

Ch. 6: Why do they hang the veil during the *Sapra*? And again in the third hour they come to the Mysteries: and the bishop with the clergy enters into the sanctuary and begins (the Mysteries)?

Consecration of the Church³⁵ and the commemoration of saints. The first chapter illustrates the reasons for re-ordering the liturgical cycle by putting the period of the Annunciation at its beginning and the Consecration of the Church at the end. According to the Author, the four weeks of the Consecration of the Church signify the four periods of the governing of Israel from the time of Moses till the coming of Christ, namely, Fathers, Judges, Kings, and Maccabees (Priests).³⁶

In the second chapter he states that the altar consecration takes place on the first Sunday of the period of the Consecration of the Church. The celebration of the consecration of the Church begins on the first day of the week, because salvation events took place on this day. He indicates that the rite of the consecration of the new altar symbolises the beginning of the creation of the new world. Since the creation of the world began in the evening (Gen 1, 4-5) the ritual of the consecration of the altar should begin at the service of

the *Ramša*, prior to the day of the consecration of the altar.³⁷ He records the sequence of events which occurred in the history of our redemption: the creation of the world, the erection of the Tabernacle, the Annunciation, Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. Since these respectable events were realised on Sunday, the church must be consecrated on that day.

For the Author, the adorning of the altar with white linen clothes typifies the light which was made by the power of the Word of God (Gen 1, 3) during the deep darkness, and it also typifies the consecration of the Tabernacle. According to him, the service of the *Lelya* symbolises the erection of the Tabernacle, which occurred at night. Similarly, the Old Testament Law symbolises the nights while the Prophets symbolise the stars.³⁸ According to the Author, the service of the *Sapra* points to the old and new virtues of our Lord's life.³⁹

Ch. 7: What is the meaning of the oil that the priest now consecrates? And what is the significance of each action which they do at that time?

Ch. 8: Why did Išo'yahb assign the commemoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary after the Nativity, (the commemoration) of John the Baptist after the Epiphany, of the Confessors and the Martyrs after the Resurrection; the Golden Friday at the beginning of the septinary of the Apostles, and (the commemoration) of the Apostles at the end of the same septinary; and the commemoration of two Apostles one after another, namely of Peter and his companion and the Evangelists: and also of Stephen, the doctors and the commemoration of others at the end of the *Hudra* in order?

End of the sixth *memra*.

³⁵ In the Library and Catalogue of Mar Aprem (G. Mooken) we can see a copy of the manuscript "Consecration of an altar", by Patriarch Išo'yahb III. 436 pages, 33×22.5cms, copied in 1537 A.D. VAN DER PLOEG, *Syriac Manuscripts*, 135.

³⁶ ECS I, 28/25; 117/107.

³⁷ ECS II, 119/108.

³⁸ ECS II, 119/108-109.

³⁹ ECS II, 119-120/109.

The third chapter states that the altar comes in front of the *Qestroma*. The Author witnesses to the ritual of placing the altar upon a pedestal on the level of *Qestroma* which represents the beginning of creation. It typifies the moment that the firmament was not created and thus heaven was not yet distinguished from earth. He mentions two customs regarding the covering of the altar at the beginning of or after the consecration.⁴⁰ He observes that those who are in favour of vesting the altar before the consecration consider that the altar should always be seen in its glory and never stripped and laid bare. While those who are contrary to the vesting of the altar prior to the consecration assert that through the altar, all symbols that are ready to come should be seen. Therefore, its glory should not be realized until its consecration is perfected. It's known that after its consecration, the altar is hallowed and set apart.⁴¹

According to the Author a new altar doesn't require washing; however, an old altar is to be washed in order to eliminate its oldness and to be renewed in Christ (2 Cor 5, 17). The washing of the altar signifies that everyone who walks according to the Old Law will not be perfected unless through the baptism of water and the Spirit.⁴²

The fourth chapter clarifies that the presbyters and the deacons should remain in the Sanctuary, while the people remain in the *Hykla*. The fifth chapter explains that the presbyters enter again into the Sanctuary at the *Lelya*, whereas the people remain on the *Hykla*. The rite up to now symbolises the beginning of creation, and Christ has not come yet. However, the Cathedral vigil psalmody (*Qala d-šabra*) manifests the service of the angels.⁴³ In the sixth chapter, the Author describes that the opening of the veil signifies the revelation of the dispensation of Christ.⁴⁴ And again in the third hour the bishop along with the clergy comes to celebrate the Mysteries and enters into the *Qanke*. The clergy enter from the small door into the sanctuary so as not to be seen by the faithful, but only by God and the heavenly angels. They enter into the Sanctuary in order to correspond typologically to the creation of the world and the entrance into the old creation.⁴⁵

The Anonymous Author witnesses to the reciting of three *Šurraya* and goes on to give an extended typological explanation of each of them. The first *Šurraya* (Ps 84) signifies the order that was given to Moses to go to Pharaoh, the second *Šurraya* (Ps 147) typifies the Exodus event of the Israelites and the third (Ps 110) reveals the event in which God commanded them to cross the Red Sea and spoke with them

⁴⁰ ECS II, 120/109.

⁴¹ ECS II, 120-121/109-110; TOMA, *Mystery of the Church*, 671.

⁴² ECS II, 121/110.

⁴³ ECS II, 122-123/110-11.

⁴⁴ ECS II, 123/112.

⁴⁵ ECS II, 123/112.

from the pillar of fire.⁴⁶ Then the celebrant recites Ps 132, 8 ("Rise up, O Lord, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might"); the same verse which is used as *qanona*. According to the Author, this *qanona*, which proceeds and follows the Psalm, manifests the erection of the Tabernacle and the Ark of His strength; in addition, it manifests the honour that the people of Israel received and the salvation that was given through the Tabernacle.⁴⁷

Chapter seven explains the meaning of the oil for the altar consecration. In the consecration of the altar there is an invocation of the Holy Spirit over the oil and the consecration takes place by the mediation of the Holy Spirit. The Author states that the oil consecrated by the pontiff resembles the oil that God ordered Moses to prepare in order to anoint the Tabernacle and its vessels.⁴⁸ He asserts that when the oil is consecrated, the bishop anoints above the altar, which resembles the mercy seat above the Ark.⁴⁹ He testifies to the signing of the door posts, stating that "(the bishop) signs the door posts, as those of that place and the inside of the Sanctuary as it was there".⁵⁰ Any oil remaining from the vessel is to be rubbed over the altar until it's totally consumed. He bears witness to the

existence of this ritual in which he asserts that at the end of the ritual of signing, the grace of God is completely bestowed over the altar by means of oil, similar to the grace which is poured over the entire Church.⁵¹ In addition, he makes reference to the reciting of particular antiphons while the bishop rubs the remaining oil upon the top of the altar.⁵² According to the Author, the rubbing of the altar with the remaining oil (until all of it has vanished) signifies that God descended and dwelled perfectly in the flesh. Hence, due to this sacramental action, the veil should be drawn as a sign of honour for the sacred place, and besides, it ought to be hidden from the people.⁵³

He witnesses to the existence of the antiphon which belongs to the conclusion of the rite of the consecration of the altar. The rite ends with the collects and concluding prayers. The *ECS* indicates that with the completion of the rite, the Church is consecrated as the "king's daughter enters in glory" (Ps 45, 14), then Christ's dispensation would be revealed perfectly.⁵⁴ The final chapter speaks about the dates of the commemorations of Mary, John the Baptist, the Confessors, Martyrs, Golden Friday, Peter and Paul, the evangelists, Stephen, the Church Fathers etc.

⁴⁶ *ECS* II, 124/112.

⁴⁷ *ECS* II, 124/112.

⁴⁸ *ECS* II, 125/113.

⁴⁹ *ECS* II, 125/113.

⁵⁰ *ECS* II, 125/113.

⁵¹ *ECS* II, 125/113.

⁵² *ECS* II, 126/114. "How good is the tranquillity and peace in which Christ conferred in His Church through His coming? He made to dwell in it His glory and consecrated it. Glorious is the power that is in it and the mysteries that are performed are glorious".

⁵³ *ECS* II, 126/114.

⁵⁴ *ECS* II, 127/115.

1.2.7. Seventh Memra: Funeral and Marriage Services

The funeral rite and marriage services are treated in the seventh *memra* which contains seven chapters.⁵⁵

In the first chapter, the Anonymous Author explains the reason for the Christian funeral Service. He clarifies that the Christians believe in the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and in their resurrection.⁵⁶ The Author articulates the meaning of the death of those who are baptised in Christ, their hope in the resurrection and in the future life, "For those who have died with Christ will also rise with Him" (1Thess 4, 13; Jn 11, 25; 13, 36; 14, 2-3).⁵⁷ In the second chapter the Author states that the people sing *mawtbha*

for the dead according to their status in the Church. Usually the women sing at every *mawtbha*: the cantor sings the *madraša* instead of the singing of the women. The bodies of the ordinary Christians are not taken into the Church for they were assigned to serve in the world.⁵⁸

In the third chapter, the Author describes the Eucharistic liturgy in connection with the funeral Service of the clergy which is to be conducted in the church itself. The Law and Prophets are read for the laity, the Epistle is read in addition for the deacons and the Gospel is read for the priests. The Gospel is read neither for the deacons nor for the sons of the covenant.⁵⁹ The *Šurra* symbolizes the annunciation of Gabriel to Daniel, the

⁵⁵ Ch. 1: Why do we give special honour to the departed and honour them with special prayers and accompany them to the sepulcher, while their end being corruption?

Ch. 2: Why do we serve *mawtbhe* over them before we carry them, adding *mawtbha* proper to each one's order; and for the laity two *mawtbhe*, whereas, for the ecclesiastics (clergy) according to their order? Why do the women sing at every *mawtbha*: but what does the singing of the exegetic hymn – *madraša* by the cantor instead of the women signify?

Ch. 3: Why do they read the Readings after the *mawtbhe* (session)? And why do they read the Readings of the Law and the Prophets for the laity; but they add the Epistle for the deacons; and for the priest and those above him, the Gospel (will be read)? And why do some read the Gospel for the deacons and some do not? And why do they enter into the Sanctuary and receive the Holy (sacrament)?

Ch. 4: Why do they carry the dead to the sepulcher in the Service (*Tešmeštâ*)? And why do they all go out in two rows? And why do they stand, while they are reciting the 'Onitâ? And (why) are they silent when they are going out? And why do both rows stand when they recite the variation (*Šuhlâpa*) alternatively?

Ch. 5: Why do they recite the *qudaša* (*anaphora*), when they arrive at the sepulcher? And why does the one who preside this (*anaphora*)? And why do they now glorify and proclaim and afterwards they say *memra* or a *pasoga*?

Ch. 6: Why do they make the commemoration of the departed on the third day: and not on the second day, and why repeated (it) at the seventh, on the fifteenth and at the end of the month?

Ch. 7: What signifies the betrothal of a woman and the marriage – *šawtaputâ*?
End of the preface of the seven *memre*.

⁵⁶ ECS II, 136/123.

⁵⁷ ECS II, 124-25/112-113.

⁵⁸ ECS II, 140/126-127.

⁵⁹ ECS II, 143/129-30.

reading of the Epistle signifies the dispensation of our Lord from the Annunciation to His baptism, the *Zummara* stands for John the Baptist and the reading of the Gospel signifies the baptism of our Lord and His dispensation.⁶⁰ The 'Onitâ after the reading of the Gospel signifies the victory of the dispensation of our Lord while the *Karozutâ* symbolizes His Crucifixion and the petition of the thief for mercy that it may also be shown on the dead.⁶¹ After the readings and diaconal *Karozutâ* the Eucharistic synaxis begins, however, without a proper consecration, i.e., no *anaphora* is recited. He says:

"And he (celebrant?) says the 'Onitâ, and those in the Sanctuary respond to him. However, he doesn't consecrate the Mysteries – for the Resurrection cannot be depicted by them, rather he only comes forth to the *Šqaqona* (gangway) in order to receive the perfection of the Mysteries-the place where there is no depiction of death and Resurrection. They receive the Mysteries while he (= deceased) is laid upon the (*Šqaqona*), so that by this even though he does not participate in the (reception of the) Mysteries, he may be with them in spirit. And they receive the Holy thing and seal them (liturgy)."⁶²

In the fourth chapter, the Author articulates that after the Services in the church, all proceed to the sepulchre in silence. The two choirs that accompany,

distancing one from the other, symbolise the OT and the NT.⁶³ The fifth chapter depicts the celebration of the *anaphora* (*qudaša*) in connection with the funeral Service. The funeral rite is described in connection with the commemorative celebration of the Death and Resurrection of Christ as a sign of Christian hope for eternal life. So as Jesus awoke, so also the faithful in Christ will be awakened to new life in Christ. Because the mysterious body and blood gave life to the dead, so we think in the mystical salvation.

The sixth chapter clarifies the reasons for the memorial meal, on the third, seventh and fifteenth day and at the end of the month. According to him, it symbolizes that the dead is in communion with the crucified and resurrected Lord. The commemorative meal has the character of the celebrative meal and the sacramental sacrifice, so that the meal and the sacrificial nature of the celebration of the mystery will be once again underlined.

In the seventh *memra*, a chapter about matrimony is added.⁶³ The Anonymous Author explains marriage as the symbol of the second coming of Christ. According to him, the marriage celebration takes place in two stages, namely, betrothal (*mkuryâ*) and the wedding feast (*meštûtâ*). The betrothal of a man and woman signifies the revelation of our Lord to this world, his preaching of salvation and the guarantee of the Kingdom. Although future happiness

⁶⁰ ECS II, 144/130.

⁶¹ ECS II, 145/131.

⁶² ECS II, 145/131-132.

⁶³ ECS II, 147/133.

in the marital union is guaranteed, the betrothed are not permitted to co-habit.⁶⁴ The nuptial banquet and the communion into which the bride and the bridegroom enter symbolize resurrection.⁶⁵ The priest places the spouses on the right and bridal friends on the left to signify the separation of the Just on the right from the Evil on the left (Mt 25, 32-33). The blessing, given to the spouses, signifies the words of the King who says: "Come, ye, blessed of my Father" (Mt 25, 34), to the Just. No blessing is given to the bridal friends as they do not enter into the joy.⁶⁶

The closing of the bridal chamber (*gnona*), after the spouses have entered into it, signifies the closing of the heavenly room after the entry of the bridegroom (Mt 25, 10). The blows with which the bridal friends strike at the doors signify the torments of the impious.⁶⁷ If the nuptial banquet is prepared for three days that signifies the mystery of the Trinity through which the resurrection is perfected. If the banquet is prepared for seven days, it typifies the eternal joy which will remain always and

forever.⁶⁹ According to him, the mystery of marriage is permeated with strong eschatological types and imageries. Marriage is presented as an anticipation of man's future happiness and for a Christian it's a type of eschatological life and heavenly bliss.

Conclusion

In this article we have made an overview of the *ECS*, namely, a short analysis of its seven *memre*. We have gone through the important questions and themes of each *memra*. Liturgical year, *Ramša*, *Lelya* and *Sapra* are oriented towards the Eucharistic celebration. The structure of the *Ramša* and the structure of the first part of the Eucharistic celebration, i.e., rite of the Word are very much inter-related. Baptism, Consecration of the Church and commemoration of Saints, and Funeral and Marriage Services too find their meaning and importance only in relation with the Eucharistic celebration. That is why the Anonymous Author places the Eucharistic *memra* at the centre of the *ECS*.

⁶⁴ This chapter was not in the original of the Alqosh Code; but in this Code after the last chapter on the burial of the dead, we find 'colophon' of one book, which says that he has added here the transcription of all the work. It seems to be a continuation of the volume with the remaining book. But in the Alqosh Code this chapter is reviewed and placed at the beginning of the book. It seems to be a continuation of the volume with the remaining book. CONNOLLY, "Preface to Latin Text" II, 3.

⁶⁵ *ECS* II, 158/143; EDAKALATHUR, *Theology of Marriage*, 65.

⁶⁶ EDAKALATHUR, *Theology of Marriage*, 65.

⁶⁷ *ECS* II, 158/142-43; EDAKALATHUR, *Theology of Marriage*, 65.

⁶⁸ *ECS* II, 158/143.

⁶⁹ *ECS* II, 158/143; EDAKALATHUR, *Theology of Marriage*, 66.

The Holy Eucharist according to Alexander Schmemmann

Dr. Jyothy Maria DST

Introduction

Alexander Schmemmann, a world renowned liturgical theologian was born on 13th of September 1921 in Tallinn, Estonia, into a Russian emigrant family. His family moved to France. From there his family went to America in 1951 and he was there until his death on 13th of December 1983. He belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church and his influence on theological matters especially on Eucharist is noteworthy. Various factors such as the religiously pluralistic community in which he lived and the education he received played a great role in the making of Schmemmann's personality and in equipping him with the intellectual tools and outlook that guided his theological research and writings. His relationship with Orthodox as well as Catholic friends and scholars had a lasting influence on him. He deals with Eucharistic order, theology, and its disorder. Now we may deal with the order of the Eucharistic Liturgy.

1. Order of the Eucharistic Liturgy

Order means the arrangement or disposition of people or things in relation to each other according to a particular sequence, pattern or method. Order also means everything in its exact or proper place. Schmemmann applies at this point the term *ordo* or order to the structure and shape of the Eucharistic celebration.¹ It is true that *ordo* refers to the form of the Eucharistic celebration but it does not however, convey all the details regarding liturgical rites since these rites have obviously undergone development and change and grown in complexity.²

Schmemmann makes it clear that the liturgical structure³ of early Christianity depends primarily on the Judaic liturgy. The Christian Divine Liturgy originated from the Jewish liturgical practice especially from Synagogue order of service. The Synagogue prayers include blessing the name of God, praise, confession of sins, intercessions, all of which have been

¹ Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, trans., P. Kachur (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 13.

² Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 13.

³ Schmemmann mainly talks here about the structure of the Divine Liturgy.

adopted here. When we consider the Eucharistic structure of the early Church the existence of the assembly is obvious.

1. 1 Different Hypothesis Regarding the Jewish Inheritance

Experts⁴generally agree that the Christian Divine Liturgy is rooted in the Jewish liturgy, but the Acts of the Apostles suggests it differently. Schmemmann taking note of this says "...the Eucharistic breaking of Bread and common prayer"⁵are not derived from the Jewish prayers. How can one justify the theory? Schmemmann's assurance is that in its outward forms this independent Christian worship clearly derived from especially Hebrew worship.⁶ Undoubtedly the outward structure or shape of the Divine Liturgy derived from Hebrew worship and there is nothing new in it. The novelty, the absolute novelty is rather found in its content. The content of the Christian celebration is the Christ event, so these are radically different from the Jewish celebration. The Eucharistic order and its two distinct yet indivisible parts in the eyes of Justin the Martyr are as follows:

"One day called Sunday there is a meeting in one place of those who live in the cities or the country, and the memories of the apostle or the writings of the

prophets are read as long as time permits. When the reader has finished the president in a discourse urges and invites to the imitation of those noble things. Then we all stand up together and offer prayers...and when we have finished the prayer bread is brought wine and water."⁷

This is the earliest complete explanation of the Sunday Eucharist, wherein we see the two separate parts of the Eucharist and how one part supports the other for its fulfillment. These separate parts are: the proclamation of the Word of God, followed by the instruction; and the Breaking of Bread. These are in modern language "the Word" and "the Sacrament". Opinions differ among liturgical theologians as to whether its primitive structure was like this. For Example, Gregory Dix admits the existence of Eucharist with its essential parts: the synaxis and the Eucharist, but he denies the theory that they were performed together from the very beginning. He was convinced that the Word and the Eucharist were celebrated separately, and were united only later. But Oscar Cullmann comments on the writing of Justin the Martyr and affirm that they were celebrated together from the very beginning of the Church. Schmemmann agrees with Oscar Cullmann in his Word

⁴ For Example O.Cullman, Bultmann, G. Dix, C. Giraudo etc...

⁵ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans., A.E. Moorhouse, (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 58.

⁶ Cf. Alexander Schmemman, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 58-59.

⁷ Justin Martyr, *Apologiae 1*, trans., T.B. Faalls, *Saint Justin Martyr, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*, vol.6, 9 (Washington D.C: The Catholic University of America Press in associated with Consortium Books, 1977) 106-107.

and Sacrament synthesis, and gives equal importance to both of them.⁸ "...the contemporary order of the Eucharist where there is an inseparable link between so called liturgy of the Catechumens dedicated primarily to the word of God and the liturgy of the faithful, consisting of the offering consecration and the distribution of the Holy Gifts."⁹ This was the structure of the Eucharist from the very beginning of the Church. The second point is that the normal celebrant of the Eucharist was the bishop.¹⁰ The Eucharist has a co-relation and conjunction with the liturgy of time. The inter-connection between the Word, the Sacrament and the liturgy of time is very important when we consider about the structure of the Eucharist. This was the earliest order of the liturgical celebration. Now we may see the theology of the Eucharist according to Schmemmann.

2. The Church and the Eucharist

The Eucharist is related to the Church. Schmemmann admits the axiom "The Church makes the Eucharist and the

Eucharist makes the Church"¹¹ and states that the Eucharist is the fundamental action and sacrament of the Church and that it builds up the Church. He affirms this reciprocity thus "the *ecclesia* exists in and through the *leitourgia*, and its whole life is a *leitourgia*"¹² and the Eucharist is the action of the Church.

Schmemmann depicts the Eucharistic intention of the Church. "The Church has been established in this world to celebrate the Eucharist, to save man by restoring his Eucharistic being."¹³ All the ministries and the entire life of the Church find their fulfillment in the liturgy. Schmemmann gives significance to the Eucharist and the Church and one sees evidence of this in his autobiography too.

According to him the axiom that the Eucharist makes the Church refers to the Christic centrality of the Eucharist, namely, the *anamnesis* of the mystery of Christ. In St. Paul's¹⁴ letter there is an indicative of the ecclesial dimension of the

⁸ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 66.

⁹ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 66.

¹⁰ Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 94.

¹¹ Cardinal Henri de Lubac joined this dictum in his work, *The Splendour of the Church*, trans., M. Mason, (New York: Sheed&Ward, 1959) 92-93.

¹² For him, without the Church the explanation of the Eucharist or what is happening in it is impossible. So the liturgy is the Church *in actu*. Cf. A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Eucharist," *Liturgy and Tradition: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemmann*, T. Fisch ed., (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990) 86.

¹³ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983*, trans., J. Schmemmann, (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000) 25.

¹⁴ The communion in the body and blood of Christ effects the ecclesial communion, sharing the unity of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. The key text of St. Paul to the Corinthians, 1Cor 10:16-17, is of fundamental importance in this understanding.

Eucharist and in the father of the Church¹⁵, we find the basic reflection of the doctrine that the Eucharist makes the Church. The French Catholic theologian Jean Danielou has developed this perspective in his studies. Edward G. Farrugia¹⁶ points out that theologically speaking we might find its expositions in the writings of the Orthodox theologians such as George Florovsky, Nicholas Afanasiev, John Meyendorff, Alexander Schmemmann and later D. Zizioulas¹⁷. As Zizioulas put it in a study, in the early Church the Eucharist was not considered as an act of a pre-existing Church; it was an event constitutive of the being of the Church, enabling the Church to constitute the Church's being¹⁸. In Schmemmann there are mainly two reasons for the statement that the Eucharist makes the Church.

(a) The Eucharist generates the Church. The basis of Church's existence is the Eucharist. He asserts that the Church

exists by and in the Eucharist, understood and lived as the sacrament of the Church, as the act which ever makes the Church to be what she is.¹⁹ It is true that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the Church, but the important fact one must remember is that the Church's existence is always dependent on the Eucharist.

(b) Schmemmann puts the Eucharist at the centre of the Church. "Without putting the Eucharist at the very centre, the Church is a 'religious phenomenon,' but not the Church of Christ, the pillar and bulwark of the truth (1Tm 3:15)."²⁰ He tends slightly against seeing the Church or Christianity as a religion or religious phenomenon, as this would remove reality from truth. He evaluates Church history where, in every epoch there was a tendency to reduce the Eucharist "...to fasting and preparation, tear it away from the Church (ecclesiology), from the world (cosmology, history) and from the Kingdom (eschatology)."²¹

¹⁵ John Paul II in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* even quotes these verses with the commentary of St. John Chrysostom: "the bread which we break, is it not a communion in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" St John Chrysostom's commentary on these verses is profound and perceptive: "For what is the bread? It is the Body of Christ. And what do those who receive it become? The Body of Christ-not many bodies, but one body. For as a bread is completely one, though made up of many grains of wheat, and these, albeit unseen, remain nonetheless present, in such a way their difference is not apparent since they have been made a perfect whole, so too are we mutually joined to one another and together united with Christ." *Homiliae XLIV in Epistolam primam ad Corinthios* 24:2, Cf. Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (17-14-2003) n. 23.

¹⁶ Cf. E. G. Farrugia, *Tradition in Transition*, (Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 1996) 173-204.

¹⁷ Jean D. Zizioulas (1931), is a great contemporary Orthodox theologian and metropolitan of Pergamo.

¹⁸ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985) 20-21.

¹⁹ A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Eucharist," 72.

²⁰ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983*, 310.

²¹ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983*, 310.

The ecclesial, cosmic and eschatological reduction of the Eucharist eliminates the very essence and nature of the Eucharist being itself. Schmemmann understands that the retrieval of the Eucharist means the recovery of the Church itself. In the words of Plekon, Schmemmann's idea is this: "To recover the true place and meaning of the Eucharist is to recover the Church, and to recover the Church entails recovering the Eucharist."²² He gives the Eucharist pride of place, but he does not reduce the Church's whole liturgical life to the Eucharist alone. He does, however, affirm very clearly the centrality of the Eucharist proposing "...to regard it not as the summit, or centre, or source of this life, but in fact as its sole content."²³ The uniqueness of Eucharist is self-evident here.

2.1 Inter-Relationship between Assembly, Eucharist and the Church

The Eucharist makes the Church, because the Eucharist is the very life of the Church. But how does the Eucharist relate itself to the assembly and the Church? There existed a very close relation between the assembly, the Eucharist and the Church from the very beginning of Christianity. Indeed, from the very beginning the undoubted triunity of the assembly, the Eucharist and the Church existed and to

this the whole early tradition of the Church, following St. Paul unanimously testifies.²⁴ The sole source of this interdependency or the interconnection is the Eucharist because it is "...the 'sacrament of the assembly' and, hence, the 'sacrament of the Church'."²⁵ Schmemmann claims that the Eucharist connected the assembly with the Church, and it is in this assembly that all are ordained and all serve, each in his place, in the one liturgical action of the Church.

Obviously there are mutual interactions or interrelationships between these three elements. For example, the first Christian assembly was designated as the Church. It is the assembly, not any building that was called the Church. Schmemmann acknowledges that the assembly, the Eucharist and the Lord's Day were unique for the early Christians. But this connection or the uniqueness existed mainly from the liturgical point of view. It is the whole assembly, the Body of Christ united with its Head that celebrates the Eucharist. He notes that all liturgical actions of the worshipping community especially the celebration of the sacraments *par excellence*, the Holy Eucharist, are the very actualization of the people as *ecclesia* or assembly of believers.

²² M. Plekon, "The Church, the Eucharist and the Kingdom: Towards an Assessment of the Theological Legacy of Alexander Schmemmann," SVTQ 40:3 (1996) 129.

²³ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 45.

²⁴ Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 11.

²⁵ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 13.

Schmemmann criticizes the mentality of modern people who participate in the liturgical celebration. People come to the Church in order to satisfy their needs, which is not justifiable. The substance of the liturgy is that it constitutes or builds the Church rather than satisfying the particular religious needs of an individual person. He even wonders before people who go to Church for their own needs, not in order to constitute and to fulfill the Church. The Eucharist is the sacrament of eternity because those who assemble as the Church first of all accept and acknowledge their ultimate destiny. "The Church thus is the assembly, the gathering of those to whom the ultimate destination of all life has been revealed and who have accepted it."²⁶ In the Eucharist each and every one finds his eternal rest and admits Christ as the final revelation of God the Father.

3. The Eschatological and Cosmic Dimensions

So far we have tried to see the ecclesial dimension of the Eucharist. What follow are the eschatological and cosmic dimensions of the Eucharist. Robert Slesinski holds that Schmemmann's theology stresses eschatology and the kingdom of God, because both of them are tangible in

the Church. The Church is nothing but the presence and experience of Christ in the world.²⁷ Apart from him there are many other theologians and liturgists who witness to eschatology as the focal point of the Church and the Eucharist. For example, according to Gregory Dix, the contact of the church within time with the single eschaton, the coming of the Kingdom of God beyond time, it should follow that one consequence within time should be the gift to the Church of that 'Spirit' by which, so to speak, the Church maintains itself in time as the Body of Christ.²⁸

For Dix the Church becomes the Body of Christ through the Eucharist. Certainly, it is a mystery and the process of this becoming will be completed only in the 'world to come'. In Dix's theology Schmemmann sees the affirmation of the purely eschatological nature of both the Church and the Eucharist.²⁹

Schmemmann's eschatological insight with reference to the Eucharist is seen in many places. He states that this eschatological light lifts all of us to life, but this does not mean that Christianity leads us into some sort of 'other worldliness'.³⁰ He affirms that the eschatological view in no way upholds utopian 'other

²⁶ A. Schmemmann, "The Eucharist," *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy*, (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973) 29.

²⁷ Cf. R. Slesinski, "Alexander Schmemmann e la divina liturgia come Epifania del Regno," *Communio* 211, (2007) 23.

²⁸ G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1947) 266.

²⁹ Cf. A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 51.

³⁰ Cf. A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 73.

worldliness', but rather prompts us to perceive the world in a realistic way. If a human being is without eschatological hope, he or she becomes engulfed in fear and depression, in a search for security, and loses himself or herself. Schmemmann highlights the importance of eschatology linked with the Eucharist and shows how this hope nourishes Christians in their day today life. His own life testifies to this. "I know that I am simplifying, but I cannot repress the strong conviction, which has matured in me for a very long time, almost since childhood, that the essence of Christianity is eschatological."³¹ He warns against the tendency to cancel or abolish the eschatological significance of the Eucharist and considers any deviation as amounting to apostasy by attempting to offer a substitute for Christianity.

3.1 Eucharist and the Kingdom

Coming himself from an old-world Orthodox culture which had long relegated baptism to a private family ceremony, Schmemmann taught us to look intently at each word and gesture in the three-fold sacraments of initiation: baptism-confirmation-Eucharist. All these together bring us into the life of the kingdom. The Eucharist is not a means of distributing the benefits of the kingdom: it is the kingdom itself manifested. He states that the true

nature of the Eucharist is eschatological for mainly five reasons:

(a) It anticipates the kingdom reality here and now and at the same time, it helps a person to achieve its fullness in the age to come. As already mentioned, his concern about the Eucharist is that it is the sacrament of *parousia*, on the one hand and it is the sacrament of the *beginning* on the other. The Eucharist is the *beginning*, in the sense that through it the kingdom of God is inaugurated in one's own life, and it is the end in the sense that it is the final destiny of humanity, the fullness of joy and happiness in the Risen Christ.

(b) The Eucharist is the pledge and assurance of the world to come. All sacraments confer this hope to some extent but mainly "...the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and the sacraments according to early Christian understanding are precisely the means of the eschatological life of the Church."³² Schmemmann believes that the eschatological perception of the Eucharist in no way indicates a negation of time or renunciation of the world. It is an affirmation of the reality which is hidden in Christ. All the sacraments especially the double-sacraments provide this in a special way.

(c) For Schmemmann the Eucharist and the kingdom are inseparable, because

³¹ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983*, 204.

³² A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Liturgical Tradition, *Liturgy and Tradition. Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemmann*, T. Fisch ed., (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990) 17.

for him baptism and the breaking of bread are the signs of the kingdom.³³ He explains that the whole meaning of the Eucharist is to constantly blow everything up from inside by referring it not only to the transcendent, but also to Christ and his kingdom. The Eucharist refers to the kingdom, which means that the Church identifies itself as 'in this world, but not of this world'.

Dix, who inspired and influenced Schmemann, explains the kingdom aspect of the Eucharist in this way:

"In the primitive conception there is but one eschaton, one 'coming', the coming to the Father of redeemed mankind, which is the realization of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is realized in its fullness in the sacrifice of Christ and its acceptance 'His death and resurrection' of which the Eucharist is the anamnesis."³⁴

For Dix, through Christ's sacrificial death, the kingdom is realized, and therefore, the Eucharist is the remembrance of that actualization. The Eucharist is the anamnesis of the Christ event in time and space. So whenever we celebrate the Eucharist there is a realization of this

kingdom too. Schmemann acknowledges that all sacraments are symbols of the Kingdom.

(d) For Schmemann the Eucharist and the kingdom are one and the same reality. He says that it is the sacrament of the kingdom.³⁵ He himself underlined that the Church proclaims this truth in the initial part of the liturgy itself; "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages."³⁶ In this citation one sees a special reference concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist to the kingdom since, for him, the Eucharist is a communion meal wherein we all are partakers of Christ's table.³⁷ While he develops his theology of the Eucharist, in this way, he proposes the satisfactory element of the Eucharist, that it is the typical characteristic of the kingdom of God. Consequently, he gives greatest attention to the reception of holy communion.³⁸

(e) Schmemann acknowledges that the Eucharist is first and foremost a journey or a procession in which the final goal is to arrive in the kingdom. "It is the journey of the Church into the dimension of the

³³ A. Schmemann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, trans., L.W. Kesich (Crestwood: New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977) 11.

³⁴ G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 265.

³⁵ Cf. A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 37.

³⁶ A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 40.

³⁷ He explains that the Eucharist is the sacrament of the coming of the risen Lord, of our meeting and communion with him 'at his table in his kingdom'. Cf. A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 43.

³⁸ Cf. A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 28.

Kingdom.”³⁹ The early Christians were profoundly convinced of this reality. Indeed, wherever the early Christians went they took no programmes or theories, but wherever they went, the seeds of the kingdom sprouted, faith was kindled, life was transfigured and things impossible were made possible. Here it is being suggested that we Christians should take the kingdom within us throughout our spiritual journey.

Metropolitan Philip notes that Schmemmann’s “...emphasis on the Eucharistic experience as a journey to the kingdom, created a spiritual renaissance in thousands of parishes throughout the Orthodox world”.⁴⁰ The Divine Liturgy is the way to kingdom, and the Doxology of the Orthodox liturgy reveals this.

3.2 Eucharist and Cosmos

Schmemmann emphasized the ecclesial and eschatological dimensions of the Eucharist, but the cosmic vision of the Eucharist is equally significant in his writings. He claims that the Eucharist embraces the entire cosmic reality since through it we offer to God ourselves and the entire cosmos. He expounds, “...according to the mind of the Church our initial offering in the Eucharist is not merely of two things but also of our whole world, our whole life in all its

dimensions”.⁴¹ Obviously the Eucharist embraces all creatures.

In the Divine Liturgy not only the salvation of priests and participants comes about, but the salvation of the whole of humanity. In other words, the Divine Liturgy is not only for us but for all, so our participation in the liturgical services of the Church renders grace for all of humanity. Schmemmann declares, “...we shall see in that bread and wine placed upon the altar not merely our individual selves but the whole world, and we shall then see them immediately in their final point and consummation.”⁴² And within the patristic understanding of the transformation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore, the elements retain their creaturely integrity while also manifesting the New Creation in Christ.

4. Eucharist as Sacrament

Schmemmann has no doubt about the nature of the Eucharist as a sacrament, and Christ’s complete presence in it. The Eucharist is entirely a sacrament, as each and every part of it has equal significance. Therefore, one cannot divide the Eucharist into sacramental or non sacramental components. He acknowledges that “...the Eucharist is the principle sacrament in the sense that in it the entire liturgy finds its

³⁹ A. Schmemmann, “The Eucharist,” 26.

⁴⁰ M. Philip, “I have Fought the Good Fight,” 38.

⁴¹ A. Schmemmann, “The World as Sacrament,” *Church, World, Mission: Reflections on Orthodoxy in the West*, (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1979) SVTQ 28:1 (1984) 222.

⁴² A. Schmemmann, “The World as Sacrament,” 224.

fulfillment, everything that it witnesses to, that is manifests, to which it leads and ascends."⁴³ In the Eucharist, the Church is assembled by the Holy Spirit to enter and ascend to the kingdom. Through this sacrament we become one in Christ and a part of the Body of Christ. For examples, he says, "Through the sacraments and especially through the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the Church... 'becomes that which it' i.e., the Body of Christ, a new unity of men in Him."⁴⁴ This does not mean that the Church realizes her becoming only through the Eucharist, rather he shows the significance of the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

Schmemmann understands that the Eucharist is both a sacrament and the summit of all other sacraments.⁴⁵ Going beyond this he notes that the Eucharist is a sacrament in the fullest sense, because it contains the decisive factor of the word sacrament. It "...is the sacrament, in the deepest and comprehensive sense of the word, its key and criterion being in the Eucharist. Anything else is not only relative, but, by its very nature, passing."⁴⁶ He here denotes the very characteristic or nature of the sacraments as a rite of 'passage'. It is a passage from old to new. This thought is reflected when he talks

about the sacramentality of creation and the cosmos too. But the Eucharist is a reality, not a passing thing. The divine and human elements make the Eucharist as a sacrament.

He explains that the sacrament of the Eucharist is a single act or rite so it is a single sacrament and all its parts and their entire sequence and structure are, therefore, in coordination with each other. Here he is talking about the importance of each and every part of the Eucharist. The institutional part is the very heart of the Divine Liturgy, but without the other parts this particular part cannot exist. Schmemmann proposes that the Eucharist is a single act and each and every part of it is significant and united with each other, and this unity reveals what has been accomplished once and for all for the whole humanity.

5. Disorder of the Sacrament of Eucharist

After a lengthy description of Eucharistic order and theology we shall now endeavour to grasp the elements of Eucharistic disorder. The Scholastic reduction mainly set aside the primitive order. Scholasticism greatly reduced the Eucharist and one can see this lessening in its various elements. (a) Schmemmann argues

⁴³ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 164.

⁴⁴ A. Schmemmann, *Liturgy and Life: Christian Development through Liturgical Experience*, 2-13.

⁴⁵ He exposes the importance of the Eucharist, "...the eucharist is the crowning and fulfillment of the liturgy, just as the liturgy is the crowning and fulfillment of the entire life and the entire experience of the Church".

A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 161.

⁴⁶ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals of Alexander Schmemmann 1873-1983*, 89.

that the disorder of the Eucharist we can see on the experiential level. "...centuries of 'Western captivity' not only alter the theological 'mind' but, by the same token, tragically narrow and obscure the very concept and experience of liturgy, of its place and function within the life of the Church."⁴⁷ Not only the experiential level but also the position of the Divine Liturgy in the Church were altered during the Scholastic period. In one way, all the words, the rites, and the prayers presuppose, reveal, and make you think of some great tragedy.

(b) Scholasticism gave importance to the inappropriate theological definition concerning the Eucharistic liturgy. This means scholastic theology exhausts itself in purely formal and truly irrelevant definitions of sacrifice and transubstantiation.⁴⁸ At the same time, one sees the diminution of the Eucharist to a singular moment of consecratory formula. This means our school theology, "...long ago in fact dismissed the entire ordo of the Eucharist from its field of interest and attention and consecrated entirely upon a single moment: the isolated consecrated formula."⁴⁹

(c) There was an omission of the eschatological concept from the Eucharistic liturgy. He elucidates "...the most important omission was that of the

essentially eschatological nature of the leitourgia, its relation to and dependence upon the central object of Christian faith, i.e. the Kingdom of God".⁵⁰ Not only eschatology but also the ecclesial and cosmic dimensions were ignored. The reduction of the Eucharist from the view point of this unity clearly contradicts the very ordo of the Eucharist, as it had been preserved by the Church from the very beginning. Throughout history we see the gradual divergence of these three entities from the consciousness of the Church.

(d) Scholastic theology gave significance only to the second part of the Eucharist. The word and the Eucharist are equally important, because both parts were equally significant for the early Christians. Scholasticism also ignored the liturgical ordo of the eucharistic celebration, the interdependence within it of the synaxis, the word, the offertory, and the Eucharist. For Scholastics the word and sacrament were entirely different schemes. Not only did they ignore the relationship of the word and sacrament, but also they concentrated more on sacrifice, validity and communion. Following the path of Scholasticism, Western theology places greater emphasis on these concepts, which naturally still persist. In the Scholastic period, the Eucharist became one among many

⁴⁷ A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Liturgy," 135.

⁴⁸ Cf. A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Liturgy," 139.

⁴⁹ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, 31.

⁵⁰ A. Schmemmann, "Theology and Liturgy," 145.

sacraments, basically it was reverted to only a means of attaining grace.

(e) Scholasticism totally ignored the significance of the assembly and the ecclesiological significance of the Eucharist. For C. Giraudo, Scholastic theology conveniently overlooked the fact that the real presence does not have any finality in itself, but is destined to form the Church.⁵¹ Schmemmann recommends renewal in the liturgy of the Church, which is, of course, necessary. In doing so one should overcome the Western fixations as well as historicisms. It is true that Schmemmann sees only one side of this question, however. Scholasticism in its time also tried to put order into the liturgy and sacraments based on the Gospel.

For the renewal of the Eucharist Schmemmann recommends rediscovering the Church itself. He notes that going back to the Bible and the Fathers means, above all, going back to the Church, the Eucharist and to the Eucharist through the Church, because the Church exists in and through the Divine Liturgy, and its whole life is a liturgy.

Conclusion

Alexander Schmemmann left his imprint on the twentieth century as one of its most discussed and influential Orthodox theologians. From the beginning of his career he gained much insight into the nature of order in the Church. 1. Order is the boarder which helps define a well-regulated organism from chaos and promote clarity. 2. Liturgical ordo is an order of a special kind, the basic point of reference for other kinds of order in the Church. 3. The essence of order is "liturgical", i.e., it has to function with a pre-established character defining an organism's being and ultimate well-being. Liturgy is not merely a dimension of life, but it is the life of our life. Schmemmann is not only thoroughly convinced of this, but also suggests that this aspect serves as an antidote to a disintegration of the liturgical vision. He insisted on having a more perfect understanding of that liturgical vision which he considered to be the source and formulation of Orthodox life. Order is related to the cosmos and sacraments. Save order, and order will save you, because it ultimately brings us into contact with Chris's best wishes for the Church.

⁵¹ Cf. C. Giraudo, *In unum corpus: Trattato mistagogico sull'eucaristia*, (Roma: St. Paul Publications, 2001) 15.

News

1. Syro Malabar Church with a new Major Archbishop

Bishop Mar George Alencherry was elected as the new Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar Church. He is the third major archbishop and the first major archbishop to be elected by the Syro Malabar bishops Synod. He is from the Archeparchy of Changanacherry. He has served the Church in many offices like Catechism director, Deputy Secretary of K. C. B. C, Director of P. O. C, Professor of theology at Paurastya Vidyapitham and as the Proto Syncellus of Archdiocese of Changanacherry. He was appointed as the bishop of Thuckalay in 1997. Mar Antony Cardinal Padiyara and Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil were the former Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar Church.

2. Vadavathoor Seminary in its Golden Jubilee Year

St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor celebrates its 50th Year of founding. The seminary started as per the direction from the Oriental Congregation, Rome on 26th April, 1962 (Prot. No. 260/59). This seminary was established with the special interest of Cardinal Eugene

Tisserant, the prefect of the Oriented^{al} Congregation then. He was very much influenced by the governance of Rev. Dr. Placid. J. Podipara CMI, the Consultor of the Oriental Congregation and the great theologian of the Syro Malabar Church. Malabar^{Major} Archbishop Mar George Alencherry inaugurated the Jubilee celebrations on 4th July 2011. Many bishops and priests participated in the function. Till now this august institution of the Syro Malabar Church has fruitfully Succeeded in making more than 1600 priests to the Universal Church. Rev. Dr. Alex Tharamangalam is the present rector of the seminary.

3. Paurastya Vidyapitham, Vadavathoor got new dignitaries

Rev. Dr. Vincent Alappatt, from the diocese of Irinjalakuda appointed as the president of Paurastya Vidhyapitham and Rev. Dr. James Thalachelloor from the eparchy of Kanjirappally as the Vice-President. Dr. Alappatt was the Proto Syncellus of Irinjalakkuda. Dr. Thalachelloor is the professor of Paurastya Vidyapitham and the seminary. Both of them have doctorates in scripture and Canon Low respectively. The appointment is for three years.